UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNICATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF EMOTION IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

by

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ABSTRACT

The current study sought to understand the communicative construction of emotion in nonprofit organizations. Two research questions asked how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion regarding the nature of nonprofit work and concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers. Seventeen nonprofit workers were interviewed within one organization. Findings include defining, contextualizing, and constructing emotion explicitly in relation to the nature of nonprofit work. Concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers, nonprofit workers relate to the organization, construct identities, and construct relationships with one another. The current work qualitatively adds to organizational communication literature, particularly at the intersection of nonprofit work, workers, and emotion. Most importantly, this study complicates current conceptualizations of emotion in nonprofit organizations by bringing in ideas of affect theory.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study offers an exploration into emotion within nonprofit organizations. Considering current literature as it relates to nonprofit organizations (NPOs), communication, nonprofit workers, and emotion, I suggest that complexity is a necessary addition in order to move toward communication-specific ideas of the nonprofit sector. Eschenfelder (2012) maintained that emotion is one avenue toward understanding in-depth communicative processes of nonprofit organizational communication. In a supplementary argument, Koschmann (2012) argued for a communication-specific theory of nonprofit organizations. Lewis (2005, 2012) suggested many ways to understand nonprofit organizing, one of which was through understanding volunteers. My goal as a communication scholar with a focus on the nonprofit sector is to explore the communicative construction of emotion in NPOs. Although the calls for elaboration have been made, it is important to further elaborate on the purpose and usefulness of communicatively studying NPOs with a focus on emotion.

Currently, there is no communication-specific theory about the NPO sector and consequently no way to communicatively theorize the communicative processes and human interactions within NPOs (Koschmann, 2012). Nonprofit organizations and elements of the nonprofit sector have received attention in fields of psychology, sociology, and business, but little focus in communication research (Eschenfelder, 2012; Wilson, 2012). For example, Lohmann, a nonprofit management scholar (1992), posited a theory of the nonprofit sector that includes social action, affluence, authenticity, continuity, rationality, near-universality, autonomy, intrinsic valuation, and ordinary language. These nine elements of Lohmann's theory are useful for nonprofit theorizing, but this theory is void of explicit communication-specific ideas. Similarly, Wilson (2012), a sociologist, described volunteer studies relative to psychological, sociological, and business perspectives, but lacked a communicative perspective on volunteerism. Koschmann (2012) argued, "In addition to studying volunteer communication, we should also develop communicative theories of volunteering (p. 140)." A communicative framework relevant to nonprofit organizations would benefit organizational communication studies and other areas where NPOs are concerned.

One avenue for creating a communicative theory of NPOs is through the study of emotions, due to the service component of nonprofit work (Eschenfelder, 2012). Furthermore, Rafaeli and Worline (2001) suggested that when people talk about others they work with, they also talk about their emotions at work. The current study contributes to this by supporting a move toward a communicative theory of NPOs while exploring the communicative constructions of nonprofit worker emotions.

In addition to supporting the need for a communication-specific theory of NPOs, I seek to demonstrate the value of NPOs and the communication patterns that constitute the organizations. This study does this by examining the communicative constructions of emotion of nonprofit workers. The impact NPOs have on society is significant—simply consider the NPOs that have aided in your personal development. I argue that the warrant for communication research in NPOs is not that NPOs are foundationally different or operate in opposition to for-profit or government sector organizations. Particularly, the relationships among and between nonprofit workers present a fruitful platform through which to understand complicated processes of emotion *and* organizational communication (Lewis, 2012). The reason I adopt the phrase "nonprofit workers" is twofold: first, to quickly identify both paid staff (those who earn a living through their work) and volunteers (those who do not receive financial compensation); and second, to focus on these two groups (excluding nonprofit boards, donors, clients, and others) in order to highlight the communicative relationships of nonprofit workers. Under the larger frame "nonprofit workers," I refer to office volunteers (OVs), paid workers (PWs), and remote volunteers (RVs). In addition to relationships with other nonprofit workers, employees and volunteers experience emotion and emotional labor (Eschenfelder, 2012) due to the nature of nonprofit work (e.g., caring for the homeless, underprivileged populations, or abandoned animals). Defining emotion is not as simple as defining nonprofit workers, but to provide a starting point, I point out a previous definition of emotion. Guerrero, Anderson, and Trost (1998) equate defining emotion to defining pornography. However, when defining pornography as "you know it when you see it," with an emotion, you know it when you feel it. Planalp (1999) claims that emotion is "The sophisticated capacity of human beings to coordinate with others" (p. 1) and that "without emotion, nothing makes any difference; we are indifferent. Life goes on, but we are removed from it" (p. 10). Therefore, I conceptualize emotion as a resource that nonprofit workers can use, but I simultaneously acknowledge that emotion*al* is something nonprofit workers are.

Most definitions of emotion offer little room to communicatively theorize about emotion in organizations, and NPOs specifically. The lack of depth in this description leads to essentialized descriptions, over-simplified discussions, and above all, a sort of idea that invalidates the depth and breadth of emotions. Within the literature review and the presentation of relevant theories, I discuss this superficiality, which is often used when describing emotions. For this reason, my argument and purpose in my work is to complicate the discussion of emotion in NPOs by drawing on social identity and affect theories.

After establishing a three-fold rationale for the importance of this work, I direct attention to the existing literature. In order to understand the frame of my research, I present a thorough review of relevant scholarship as it relates to previous nonprofit research, nonprofit workers, and emotion. I also review two theories that have value in terms of guiding the study: social identity theory (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Tidwell, 2005; Turner, 1982), and affect theory (Brennan, 2004; Gregg & Siegworth, 2010; Massumi, 1995). Two research questions dealing with the nature of nonprofit work and nonprofit relationships emerge from the literature and I describe a qualitative research study to answer those questions. I include an in-depth description of research methods, data collection, and analysis, followed by an extensive results and analysis section. I summarize with a discussion of implications, future directions, and limitations, and conclude with a brief personal reflection.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recognizing the beneficial nature of interdisciplinary perspectives, the current research utilizes previous studies from many viewpoints including sociological, psychological, managerial, and economic theorizations. In addition, this study is informed by literatures regarding NPOs and workers, emotions and emotional labor, social identity, and affect theories. Following Deetz (2010), I argue that communication, or “to make common” should draw attention away from a need to differentiate between forms of scholarship toward a desire to invent together—combining knowledge from several academic areas to understand elements of nonprofit organizational communication. This study seeks an in-depth understanding of the communicative construction of emotions relating to nonprofit work and relationships from the individual’s perspective.

Nonprofit Organization Research

It is important to recognize the high level of complexity when considering nonprofit organizations. The intricacies begin with the very discourse that encompasses and surrounds NPOs—the "nonprofit sector." When recognizing the diversity of terms used to identify the sector ("independent sector," "nongovernmental sector," "third sector," "civil sector," and so forth), it is apparent that the sector has vast ambiguity and a malleable sense of usefulness. Recent research about NPOs has grown, likely due to the growth of the sector at large. From 2000 to 2010, as employment rates in the nonprofit sector increased (17%), the employee wages also increased 29% as recorded in *The Nonprofit Almanac 2012* authored by Roeger, Blackwood, and Pettijohn, cited in Comby (2012). While employment rates and employee wages in the nonprofit sector grew from 2000-2010, government agency employment only grew 8% and business employment shrunk 6% (Comby, 2012). As the nonprofit sector experiences grew, so did research on the nonprofit sector. Eschenfelder (2012) suggested that the growth in nonprofit research is because of increasing challenges, such as budget constraints. For example, in 8 of the 10 years the *Nonprofit Almanac 2012* records, the nonprofit sector spent more than it earned (Comby, 2012), providing an intriguing platform for socioeconomic research. Eikenberry and

Kluver (2004) supported this notion from a public administration perspective, positing that marketization threatens NPOs. Marketization is the process that enables state-owned enterprises to act like market-oriented firms (Van der Hoven & Sziráczki, 1997). Arguably, budget constraints, marketization, and a shifting economy increased academic interest in the nonprofit sector in order to understand nonprofit sector functions, theorize about the sector academically, and create practical advice for nonprofits in a changing economy.

Studies in NPOs take several perspectives, but many studies tend to frame NPOs as different and separate from for-profit and governmental sectors (Lewis, 2005), perhaps because the nonprofit sector is the last of the three sectors to receive thorough academic attention. In an attempt to highlight the current societal role of NPOs outside of communication theorizing, it is important to understand the purpose of the nonprofit sector relative to other sectors.

Contrary to government organizations, which thrive on political mandates, and business organizations, which exist alongside market forces, NPOs exist for thousands of purposes, directed by the citizens who need them. Some theorists have posited that the nonprofit sector exists as a means of providing American citizens with services that government and corporate agencies have failed to provide. In this view, the NPO sector exists to provide services that citizens may not otherwise have access to, such as health care, financial aid, and social support. Contrary to the assertions of failure theories, such as market failure and contract failure (Gassler, 1998; Lewis, 2005; Young, 1989), the nonprofit sector is purposeful and intentionally exists in our current democratic society. Three examples of subsectors within the NPO sector that aim to benefit all society, not just those society members who have been "failed" by government and for-profit organizations, include education and arts organizations, humanitarian nonprofits, and foundations. These failure theories propose one viable way to think about the existence of the third sector, but simultaneously draw attention away from other postulations of why nonprofits exist.

When faced with competition from government agencies and for-profit companies for their services, NPOs may utilize professionalization and commercialization (Handy, Mook, & Quarter, 2008; Kreutzer & Jager, 2011). These resource-driven change strategies are unique to NPOs and distinguish the sector from government and for-profit businesses because this change suggests these types of formalizations are not inherently a characteristic of NPOs. Much literature related to the purposefulness of NPOs tends to exist in sociological, political, and environmental perspectives and are devoid of communication-specific concepts.

However, literature that focuses on communication in NPOs tends to either spotlight communicative processes of the individual (e.g., Cosier & Dalton, 1993; Wilson, 2000) or focus on the elements of organizational structure (Brilliant & Young, 2001; Rafaeli & Worline, 2001). One exception is Taylor, Mallinson, and Bloch (2008) who used structuration theory as a guiding framework in a comparative case study between two NPOs. Taylor and colleagues (2008) focused on organizational structure, individuals of the organization, and the interaction between the structure and individual, including the organizational culture, labor processes, and emotional labor. In a qualitative comparative case study of two NPOs, they found that volunteers enjoy working in a stable organization rather than an unstable organization, particularly if the volunteer is episodic (one who only volunteers for certain events, not on a regular schedule [Lewis, 2005]). Using structuration theory as a framework allowed elements of structure, individual, and interaction to illuminate important implications for NPOs, such as the impact of emotional labor on episodic volunteers (Taylor et al., 2008). While Taylor et al. (2008) utilized structuration theory to enrich their findings, the current work looks for different frameworks, like social identity and affect theories. However, Taylor et al. (2008) demonstrated that it is valuable to consider nonprofit workers as those who communicatively construct the nonprofit sector.

Nonprofit Workers: Volunteers and Employees

Within the structure of NPOs, paid employees and volunteers drive nonprofit action. Volunteers are those individuals who freely give time without pay to an organization that aims to give benefit to a particular cause (Gaskin & Smith, 1997, referenced in Kreutzer & Jager, 2011; Wilson, 2000). Additionally, most volunteers have no monetary reason for joining or staying with an organization and there is generally no contractual obligation to the organization (Pearce, 1993). Lewis (2005) posited that value exists in studying two types of volunteers based on the dynamic effects they have on the organization: episodic (those who volunteer sporadically) and periodic (those who regularly donate time). I take these differences into consideration and base my data collection, analysis, and findings on these different types of involvement in order to allow room to understand the different perspectives each volunteer may hold. Prior research has examined volunteers' motivations (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2009), satisfaction (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002; Millette & Gagne, 2008; Vecina, Chacon, Sueriro, & Barron, 2012), recruitment and socialization (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008; Kramer, 2011), training (Costa, Chalip, & Green, 2006; Dunkin, 2005), and volunteer voice and retention (Garner & Garner, 2011). An examination of volunteer and employee emotion in NPOs is needed to propel this literature forward.

The paid counterparts to volunteers, or employees, are those who receive financial compensation for time given to the organization. Literature that discusses paid employees tends to exist in for-profit or corporate organizational realms. Specifically, research addressing the job satisfaction and motivation of paid workers is extensive (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Work of employees tends to be justified by financial compensation and contractual obligation (Judge et al., 2001). In considering the relationship between nonprofit workers, employees tend to perceive volunteers as subordinates (Ashcraft & Kedrowicz, 2002). Employees, at times, communicate superiority to the volunteers, causing emotional reactions (Ashcraft & Kedrowicz, 2002). When paid workers have less satisfactory experiences with volunteers, paid workers tend to be more stressed, overworked, and less committed to the organization (Rogelberg, Allen, Conway, Goh, Currie, & McFarland, 2010).

Much of the literature combines all nonprofit workers and does not distinguish between paid employees and volunteers despite the differences that exist in each while working together (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; English, 2006; Pugh, Groth, Henning-Thurau, 2011; Swanson, 2012). One study that distinguished between employees and volunteers is Ashcraft and Kedrowicz (2002), who examined the perceptions between and among paid staff and volunteers in a feminist NPO. Ashcraft and Kedrowicz (2002) divided between volunteer and paid staff by elaborating on the nuances of volunteer labor, summed up best when they stated, “They labor for the organization on leisure time, though not for livelihood” (p. 91). Through a lens of organizational support, they studied an organization that utilized “ethical communication” as a way to empower members of a nontraditional hierarchy. The study found many differences in how paid employees and volunteers perceive one another. For example, staff members tacitly portrayed volunteers as subordinates. The staff members who created the nontraditional hierarchy tacitly implied that volunteers were hierarchically lower than paid staff, based on interview responses and researcher observations. The type of communication Ashcraft and Kedrowicz (2002) documented reified traditional hierarchy. The study suggested that volunteers appreciate a traditional hierarchy because it indicates a familiarity of structure, clarity in chain-of-command, and that the traditional hierarchy empowers and supports the volunteers because of its familiarity. Ashcraft and Kedrowicz (2002) ultimately found that attempting to reduce hierarchy in NPOs disempowered volunteers by removing a structural form of support. The difference between volunteer and paid worker herein exist within the organizational hierarchy, as part of the nonprofit's structure. I seek to explicate complicated elements of nonprofit workers' relationships by distinguishing between volunteers and paid workers. Studying the differences between volunteers and paid workers provides space to theorize about the differences in how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion regarding the nature of nonprofit work and their relationships with other nonprofit workers.

Volunteer-Employee Differences

As the heart of NPOs, employees and volunteers share many similarities, such as their reward or gain for involvement in a NPO, or how they achieve satisfaction in their work (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Grandey, 2000; Vecina et al., 2012). More notable, however, are their differences. It is the differences between volunteers and paid staff (e.g., how they function to benefit the organization) that tend to predict how nonprofit organizing occurs. For example, during nonprofit organizational change, paid workers typically know about change processes before volunteers (Lewis, Richardson, & Hamel, 2003), which suggests hierarchical differences in organizational knowledge. Among numerous differences, NPO and organizational communication literatures contain three main streams that tease out their intricacies: motivations, wages, and interchangeability.

First, the motivations for nonprofit involvement varies from volunteer to paid employee. As nonprofit workers, scholarship reveals that their job motivations come from attitudes toward the job (Liao-Troth, 2011), organizational commitment (Van Vuuren, deJong, & Seydel, 2008), and emotions dealing with nonprofit work such as support, respect, and satisfaction (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2008, 2009; Vecina, Chacon, Marzana, & Marta, 2013). The literature also describes intrinsic motivations as coming from workers' internal sources, which typically align with volunteers (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002; Millette & Gagne, 2008), and extrinsic motivations as coming from an external source, such as wages (Judge et al., 2001), which tend to align with paid workers. Motivations also influence the attitudes, commitment, and emotions of nonprofit workers, but vary drastically from volunteer to paid worker based on their purposes in NPOs.

Second, by definition, volunteers are not compensated and paid workers are, resulting in many differences in terms of wages (Cnaan & Cascio, 1999). For example, organizational communication literature has suggested that employee motivation and commitment stems from their monetary benefits (e.g., Baker & Murawski, 1986) and has aimed to understand the impact of volunteer presence on employees' wages (Heider & Schneider, 2010; Pennerstorfer & Trukeschitz, 2012). Specifically, two studies examined nonprofit employees' wages and found that when NPOs include episodic volunteers, employee wages decrease (Heider & Schneider, 2010; Penerstorfer & Trukeschitz, 2012). Based on the effects of compensation, the motivation of paid workers to be an employee of an NPO may lessen when wages decrease. In contrast, volunteers, receiving no monetary compensation, tend to find their motivations elsewhere, like intrinsic motivations and emotional rewards.

A third difference between nonprofit workers arises when considering recent developments due to economic factors. The nonprofit field has sought to understand the interchangeability and replacement of volunteers with employees and vice versa. Some scholars have researched interchangeability of paid and voluntary labor switching off on various tasks in the same organization (Handy et al., 2008), and the implications of voluntary labor substituting for paid labor (Simmons & Emanuele, 2009). Simmons and Emanuele (2009) suggested that the presence of volunteer labor lowers minimum wage in a state, implying that the presence of volunteers lowers the amount of work employees perform, and so their pay is adjusted accordingly. Conversely, when professionals replace volunteers in a NPO, professionalization occurs (Simmons & Emanuele, 2009). Professionalization happens when the funding and size of an organization increases, making a move from reliance on volunteers to a greater dependence on paid staff (Handy et al., 2008). With the growth of the nonprofit sector (e.g., Comby, 2012) comes an increase in funding and size, moving professionalism to the forefront of the organization. Though widely debated in the public administration sector (e.g., Hwang & Powell, 2009; Suarez, 2011), professionalization can be risky for NPOs because it demonstrates a move toward for-profit organizing, removing the grassroots elements NPOs so often stand for, and blurs lines with other sectors. When interchangeability occurs the basic differences between volunteers and paid workers become apparent.

Despite the motivational, economical, and logistical differences between employees and volunteers, service in various sections of the nonprofit sector significantly binds nonprofit workers to the clients they serve. At times (not in all NPOs), the nature of the work requires nonprofit workers to go beyond standard task performance and their jobs demand emotional labor. This happens particularly when the NPO requires high levels of service work, as evidenced by two studies that each frame my proposal in unique ways: one study of nonprofit workers in a domestic violence shelter (Ashcraft & Kedrowicz, 2002), and another of two grassroots, local, service, and advocacy-oriented organizations (Taylor et al., 2008).

Emotions in Nonprofit Organizations

Emotion is meaningful and influences every aspect of our beings. At a very basic level, emotion is what gives communication life (Planalp, 1999). Scholars have argued over the usefulness of feelings and moods and current readers of emotional literature are met with a continuum of what emotion is. My use of the word "emotion" is framed through the likes of Sally Planalp (1999), James Averill (1998), and Anat Rafaeli and Monica Worline (2001) and as I present relevant literature, I do so with the argument in mind that current theorizing tends to essentialize emotion in the workplace and specifically in NPOs. A closer qualitative look can help us understand how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their own emotion, rather than supposing pre-existing terms of emotion. In striving to understand communicative aspects of emotion in a NPO context, I elaborate on the nuances of emotion studies by focusing on the approaches to and types of emotion, the characteristics of emotion, and workplace emotion, including emotional labor and emotional work.

Approaches to and Types of Emotion

From psychology literature to sociology literature, approaches to and types of emotion share similarities. Scholars have used several perspectives to understand emotions including discrete (or basic), dimensional, and prototype approaches. In the discrete approach to emotions (Guerrero et al., 1998), individuals experience basic emotions as distinct from one another. Any nonbasic emotions are blends of primary emotions. This approach considers basic types of emotions as interest, joy, surprise, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, shame, shyness, and guilt. Dimensional approaches concentrate on identifying emotions based on their placement on dimensions. Using diagrams and models, dimensional approaches allow us to visualize where primary (basic) and secondary (blended) emotions collide (e.g., Plutchik, 1983). Still yet, the prototype approach rests in the idea that language and knowledge structures shape how we conceptualize and categorize emotion (Rosch, 1977). Each approach identifies different lists of types of emotions, ranging from eleven emotions to seven emotions to four emotions (e.g., anger, happiness, sadness, and fear; Guerrero et al., 1998). Referring to emotion by lists and through specific approaches limits the potential of emotional theorization. Arguably, affect theory can step in and begin to complicate these models and lists in ways that prevent essentialization and allow headspace to consider deeper theoretical concepts. I review relevant affect theory concepts and incorporate affect theory along with the results and findings from this study in the discussion and summary of this work.

Characteristics of Emotion

Past literature tends to avoid discussing emotion in organizational communication studies, as emotions can be conceptualized as confusing, ambiguous, and irrational (Planalp, 1999). Emotions can "get in the way of sound judgment" (Grandey, 2000, p. 95) and are not part of traditional masculine organizational theorizing (Putnam & Mumby, 1993). Seen as a personal and intimate part of ourselves (Rafaeli & Worline, 2001, p. 95), emotions are a "form of communication; their primary function is to inform others (and sometimes ourselves) that a change in the situation is necessary" (Averill, 1998, p. 850). However, a change is not always necessary (in the case of positive emotions and feelings), but what is important is the acknowledgement that emotional recognition is communicative in nature. Although some studies tend to set emotions aside, other literature has suggested that emotions are bound with others and social worlds and ultimately construct reality (Averill, 1998; Rafaeli & Worline, 2001).

Another way to define emotions is as a process. Planalp (1999) described emotion as a process that contains five components: 1) objects, causes, precipitating events, 2) appraisal, 3) physiological changes, 4) action tendencies/action/expression, and 5) regulation. She elaborates on each of these and claims that these five appear in most theories, models, and charts about emotion. Furthermore, since emotion is a process, it can also be modified or changed through social interaction (Anderson & Guerrero, 1998), a primary principle of constructivism.

Emotion can have restrictive definitions that separate mood from other emotion-like experiences (Planalp, 1999). Miller, Considine, and Garner (2007) conceptualized emotion as a counterforce to traditional views of workplace functioning and borrowed Planalp's (1999) metaphor of emotion as a "burst of color" contrasted against rationality in a woven fabric of social life. In the workplace, emotion surfaces in several ways, including emotional work and emotional labor. I focus on these types specifically because organizational communication literature tends to draw on these concepts while discussing emotions. Conflicts in describing these concepts are apparent in current literature and provide evidence that the communicative construction of emotion is in need of richer understanding.

Emotional Work and Emotional Labor

Arlie Hochschild, in her foundational work, first defined emotional labor as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" (1983, p. 7). Since this defining moment for emotion studies, other scholars have built on and defined emotional labor and emotion work (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). Unfortunately, scholarship has not distinguished between types of emotion in the workplace. I base this argument on several studies that use the terms *emotional labor, emotional work, emotion labor*, and *emotion work* as transposable (Eschenfelder, 2012; Karabanow, 1999; Kruml and Geddes, 2000; Martin, Knopoff, & Beckham, 1998; Miller, Zook, & Ellis, 1989; Sass, 2000). Callahan and McCollum (2002) began to separate *emotion work* from *emotional labor* by drawing on Hochschild's use of Marx's definitions of "use-value" and "exchange-value." They identified use-value as something "You can use or gain pleasure from . . . but not necessarily get something in exchange for . . ." (Callahan & McCollum, 2002, p. 220). They related emotion work to the use-value component and posited that *emotion work* has high use-value. Therefore, they connected *emotional labor* to the exchange-value component and argued that *emotional labor* occurs when a person gains a wage or some type of compensation. According to this definition, then, nonprofit employees take on *emotional labor* because they receive compensation, and volunteers engage in *emotion work* because their participation allows them to gain pleasure and other intangible rewards. Additionally, Callahan and McCollum (2002) posited that *emotional labor* has the worker consider how their actions will influence the customer and that *emotion work* has the worker consider their interactions with coworkers. Ultimately, Callahan and McCollum (2002) used *emotion management* to describe the broader, general control of emotions in either form of use-value or exchange-value.

Conversely, Miller et al. (2007) argued there are five types of emotion in the workplace: emotional labor, emotional work, emotion with work, emotion at work, and emotion toward work. They define *emotional labor* as "involv[ing] the display of emotion that is somehow controlled and defined by management and is often perceived as inauthentic" (p. 232). This definition largely aligns with those definitions of its predecessors—Hochshild (1979, 1983), Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), and Morris and Feldman (1996). Second, Miller et al. (2007) explained that *emotional work* is "a natural outgrowth of job-related communication" (p. 233). This conceptualization places emphasis on the natural and authentic aspects of emotion, as opposed to inauthentic, demanded emotion. They identified the difference between *emotional labor* and *emotional work* in terms of the control by management and degree of authenticity. A third facet of emotion in the workplace is *emotion with work*, which involves emotions that surface through relationships with other members of the workplace.

This equates with Callahan and McCollum's (2002) definition of *emotion work*. Fourth, *emotion at work* considers emotions that begin from domains outside of the workplace but are experienced in the workplace. Finally, *emotion toward work* is the "emotional experience in which the work or job is the target of the emotion" (p. 233). Understanding the complicated nature of this discussion, Miller et al. (2007) argued that definitional overlap exists and that workers can experience several types of workplace emotions simultaneously. Although it is beneficial to understand the types of workplace emotion, most importantly, it is vital to acknowledge that literature sometimes uses these complicated terms interchangably and largely groups all divisions of emotion into *emotional labor*. In contrast to most organizational emotion literature, I use the term *emotion* to encompass all forms of emotion in the workplace. I do so in order to let the participants demonstrate how they communicatively construct their emotion regarding nonprofit work and relationships, rather than anticipating or expecting their emotion to fit neatly into emotional labor and emotional work categories. Additionally, I acknowledge that defining characteristics of emotion within these strict, container-type boundaries (types of emotional work/labor) encourages the essentialization of the complicated *process* of emotion and I continue to pursue the argument that the scholarly discussion of emotion needs to be complicated, by incorporating ideas like affect theory.

Negative and Positive Effects

Scholarship that focuses on emotional labor often attempts to mitigate the negative effects within the organization. One negative effect of emotional labor is burnout. Burnout is a general wearing out or alienation from work pressures and is typically characterized by three dimensions (Tracy, 2000): emotional exhaustion (Martínez-Iñigo, Totterdell, Alcover, & Holman, 2007), depersonalization, and decreased sense of personal accomplishment. Eschenfelder (2012) posited that an examination of emotional labor in nonprofits could decrease these negative effects in the organizations. There are three ways literature has suggested to mitigate potential harmful effects of emotional labor, including emotional awareness, bounded emotionality, and viewing emotional labor as positive.

First, several studies have suggested that emotional awareness, or being perceptive to one's own emotion, decreases dysfunctions of emotional labor. Bechtoldt, Rohrmann, De Pater, and Beersma (2011) examined nurses and police officers and found that emotion recognition served as a buffer between negative effects and emotional labor. Similarly, Lindebaum (2012) proposed two models of emotional convergence and emotional divergence and posited that these constructs inform emotional intelligence. In addition, Callahan and McCollum (2002) acknowledged the importance of emotional awareness on emotional management and suggested types of wellness plans to increase this type of emotional awareness. A second way to combat adverse effects of emotional labor is through bounded emotionality. Martin, Knopoff, and Beckman (1998) studied emotional labor in The Body Shop, a large retail organization that promotes eco-friendly policies. Although bounded emotionality and emotional labor are similar by aiming to restrict certain emotional aspects, bounded emotionality encourages expression of a wider range of emotions with a goal to build community and personal well being (Martin et al., 1998). Bounded emotionality consists of six characteristics: intersubjective limitations, emergent feelings, tolerance of ambiguity, heterarchy of goals and values, integrated self-identity and community building (Martin et al., 1998). Taken together, bounded emotionality can be a positive way to negate adverse effects of emotional labor by avoiding negative effects and emphasizing positive ones. Third, emotional labor does not always have negative effects. In some cases, emotional labor can foster feelings of personal accomplishment (Eschenfelder, 2012), moments of team bonding (Shuler & Sypher, 2000), or serve as a rationalizing tool for motivations in NPOs (e.g., Wolfe, 1998). Emotional awareness, bounded emotionality, and focusing on positive effects of emotion are tools that organizations may use to manage emotions. Particularly, this study supports current literature as it relates to emotional awareness and the positive effects of emotion, like team building and bonding.

Emotion Management

To manage emotional labor on an individual level, employees utilize two broad strategies of emotion regulation: surface acting and deep acting (Bechtoldt et al., 2011). Surface acting, defined by Hochschild (1983) and refined by Brotheridge and Lee (2002), happens when an employee suppresses their true feelings and displays emotions that they do not genuinely feel. Alternatively, deep acting (Hochschild, 1983) occurs when an employee attempts to align their true feelings with their emotional expressions resulting in the display of authentic emotions (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2000). Previous studies of surface acting and deep acting suggested that successful emotion *management* through these two strategies could result in emotional exhaustion (Grandey, 2003). Specifically, surface acting (not deep acting) tends to lead to stress (Grandey, 2003). In this view of emotion management, both surface and deep acting remains a personal process, individually managed, controlled, and produced.

Additionally, Morris and Feldman (1996) elaborated on the discussion of emotional labor using four dimensions: frequency of appropriate emotional display, attentiveness to display rules, variety of displayed emotions, and emotional dissonance. They conceptualized emotional labor as complex and multidimensional as opposed to simple and one-dimensional. Building on this elaboration, Kruml and Geddes (2000) proposed a model of emotional labor in which emotive dissonance and emotive effort are two specific dimensions of emotional labor. Drawing heavily on Hochschild's (1983) foundational discussion of emotional labor, Kruml and Geddes (2000) found that as separate but related dimensions, emotive dissonance leads to burnout and emotive effort reduces burnout. Other studies of emotional labor consider the cultural performance of emotions (Sass, 2000), the effect of emotional labor on role identification, (Taylor et al., 2008), and emotional labor in specific populations, such as youth shelter service workers (Karabanow, 1999). The current work supports these studies in terms of burnout and I describe this further in the summary and discussion.

Theoretical Underpinnings

After considering the literature relevant to NPOs, studies of nonprofit workers including volunteers and paid staff, and research on emotion, I describe two theories that I expect to be useful for their combined explanatory power. First, social identity theory (SIT) and branches of organizational identity offer insight into emotion of nonprofit workers in that emotion, as traditionally defined, is an element of one's personality and identity. Second, affect theory offers notions that closely relate to emotion but moves beyond a simplistic view of communicating emotion. Furthermore, SIT proposes that how an individual identifies impacts how they communicate. Affect theory supposes that an individual's emotional affect influences the organization. Taken together, SIT and affect theory use an individual's identification and their emotional affect to offer depth in the understanding of nonprofit organizational communication.

Social Identity Theory, Organizational Identity, and Identification

Social identity theory stems from a larger discussion of social identification or a perception of oneness with or belongingness to some human aggregate (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Social identity theory (SIT) comes from a social-psychological perspective (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tidwell, 2005) and is one way a person can identify *themselves* as part of a group. Developed by Tajfel and Turner (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Turner, 1982), SIT holds that people seek to categorize themselves and others into social categories (e.g., volunteer, paid staff, temporary). Connecting SIT to nonprofit theorizing, Tidwell (2005) posited a social identity model of volunteers in nonprofits. This model considered the effects of prosocial behaviors, organizational identification, commitment, and satisfaction on volunteers' social identification outcomes. Tidwell (2005) found that a strong social identity, particularly in volunteers, led to higher levels of commitment, satisfaction, and prosocial behavior. While contributing to NPO theorizing through SIT, the model posited is void of distinctive communication concepts. By adding communication theory, SIT can enhance emotion in NPOs by actualizing the importance of organizational roles and perceived identity by allowing personal individual emotions to inform one's identity in a larger social context. The current work supports this notion by finding that nonprofit workers tend to identify their relationships to the organization and construct their identities within the organization prior to describing their relationships with other nonprofit workers.

Tracy and Trethewey (2005) studied emotional labor specifically because it posits that workers have a “real self” and a “fake self.” They ground their essay in Hochschild (1983) and in scholars who advanced emotional labor because, they argued, emotional labor occurs when employees must be fake. The assumption of emotional labor causing workers to be fake, or inauthentic, reinforces the quintessential notion of emotional labor that an authentic self exists outside of organizational norms. The idea of real-self (authenticity) and fake-self (inauthenticity) extends from discussions of emotional labor and organizational roles (Sloan, 2007). Particularly, because identity is discursively constituted (Tracy, 2000; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005), a real-self/fake-self dichotomy is hard to escape (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005). Tracy and Trethewey (2005) presented examples of situations where it is "difficult to theorize identity without returning to the real-self/fake-self dichotomy discourse" (p. 175) and raised awareness for scholars not to essentialize research participants' existence into a real-self/fake-self dichotomy. They continued:

> Essentialism is reproduced in the emotional labor literature when researchers presume that emotion has a truer existence before it is constructed by organizational norms. This assumption underestimates the role of communication in constructing emotion and the very notion of real feelings (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005, p. 175).

Relating social identity of nonprofit workers to organizational communication, I rely on Tracy's (2000) Foucaldian perspective. Tracy (2000) argued that the self is disjointed and divided through the way organizational communication occurs. Through this view, different "selves" step forward in contextually specific manners. Understanding that different "selves" emerge at different times and under distinctive circumstances, I follow Tracy and Trethewey's (2005) description of a *crystallized self*—the idea that different parts of identity receive attention over other parts of identity at certain moments, the same way we might look at a crystal. We focus on the visible front, but that does not make the part we cannot see fake or inauthentic, it simply situates it as out-of focus. Because I study NPOs through an organizational communication lens, I utilize branches of organizational identification as a specific form of social identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Organizational identification and organizational identity, though closely related, hold several complicated differences. Arguably, organizational identity is what is central, distinctive, and enduring about an organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985), bringing focus to the organizational level of identity. Several nonprofit studies use this definition of organizational identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brilliant & Young, 2008; Golden-Biddle & Rao, 1997; Kreutzer & Jager, 2011) and support Young's (2001) proposition that identity is a deeper idea from which suggestions for structure and strategy follow. At the organizational level, NPOs utilize communicative artifacts of identification (e.g., mission statement) to guide decisions of structure and strategy (Young, 2001). Kreutzer and Jager (2011) utilized organizational identity and highlighted the concept of dual organizational identity. Dual organizational identities occur when organizational members incorporate two or more different and conflicting dimensions that are not normally expected to go together (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Studying dual organizational identities in NPOs is compelling because many NPOs operate in ambiguous environments and have unclear lines of ownership (Frumkin, 2002; Young, 2001). Mixing individual and organizational level phenomena of identity, prior research in organizational identity suggested that nonprofit volunteers and employees should “be on the same page” in order to have clear and aligned organizational identities (Solansky, Duchon, Plowman, & Martinez, 2008). However, following Tracy and Trethewey (Tracy, 2000; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005), much prior literature that discussed both organizational identification and organizational identity essentializes complicated discursive processes of communicatively constituting one’s identity. While acknowledging identification and identity on an organizational level, I center specifically on the social identification of the individuals—nonprofit employees and volunteers.

Arguably, one way of understanding identity is through the use of metaphors, a concept used in organizational communication that has been useful for identification. Organizational practitioners and scholars reference types of metaphors to understand their experiences of their organization. For example, many organizational academics have referred to the organization as a "machine," or as "containers" (Miller, 2012), which are ideographic metaphors. Other types of ideographic metaphors are often used to communicate similarities between the organization and another metaphorical idea (e.g., "We hit the ground running," "Where the rubber hits the road," "We pursued a different avenue"). The use of ideographic metaphors communicatively constructs the organization by discursively producing reality. In the examples listed above, the ideographic metaphor of a *road* is used and consequently shapes the participant's view and navigation of the organization.

Additionally, forced metaphors are also used to understand organizations, often times referencing TV shows or popular films to describe the experience. The use of metaphors in organizational identity is strongly tied to one's social identity. Therefore, this study considers participants' use of forced and ideographic metaphors as a means of looking into their implicit, perhaps subconscious, communicative constructions of experiences with emotion. In order to supplement a complicated discussion of social identity of nonprofit workers and explicate over-simplified notions of emotion, I incorporate affect theory.

Affect Theory

The history of affect within organizations (at work, in the workplace) arguably emerged in the 1920s and began to receive scientific research attention in the 1930s (For a complete review, see Weiss and Brief, 2001). Recognized as being rooted in psychology and sociology, the conflict between the dominance of the individual and the power of the social setting are two ideological differences that mark the foundations of affect in organizations (Weiss & Brief, 2001).

Through conceptualizations of emotion, we can see that emotion and affect are closely related, overlapped, and intertwined. For example, Anderson and Guerrero (1998) discussed emotional matching as a concept in which one partner matches the emotional state of another (p. 84). Within the discussion of emotional matching implicitly lie concepts of affect. Additionally, in contrasting how emotion is experienced, Massumi (1995) related an emotional experience to an “expression event” (p. 87), where elsewhere these are typified as an “affective event” (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), and elsewhere still relate to “emergence” (Massumi, 1995, p. 96). However, affect and emotion are distinct and separate agents working in combination to create the overarching affective experience. Illuminating this idea, Massumi (1995) claimed that emotion and affect follow different logics and therefore pertain to different orders. In addition, since they are distinct and separate, yet also symbiotic, affect is not ownable or recognizable.

While discussing theoretical concepts of affect and emotion, it is important to recognize that the simple use of words to articulate each concept is an essentializing experience in itself. I stand in line with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, who questioned how one can represent a sense of emotional and affective intensity if the feeling in question is generalized in the amorphous category of affect (Wetherell, 2012). I question if and how the mere writing and discussion of emotion and affect negates the complicated nature of each in their own rights. Setting this question aside, I discuss the contrasts between emotion and affect in terms of the ownership of the emotion/affect and the experience of emotion/affect.

<u>Ownership of Emotion/Affect</u>

Brian Massumi (1995) supposed that intensity (or the strength or duration of an emotion event's effect) is "asocial, but not presocial." It includes social elements that are mixed with elements that belong to other levels of functioning and combines them according to different logics (p. 91). Massumi discussed the autonomy of affect, thereby investigating the question of ownership in affect. Here, he claimed that the intensity (or effect) of affect is a blend between social organizing and personal functioning. Each person then clarifies the affective event for themselves. Massumi (1995) suggested that the autonomy of affect is its openness. Essentially, affect is autonomous to the degree to which it escapes the body. After the escape, it is formed, qualified, and situated as it emerges as emotion. It is a case of which came first, the chicken or the egg? Which comes first, emotion or affect? Answering this question would clarify who owns each, if it is the individual (or perhaps component parts of the individual) or the social groups of which the individual is a part. One supposition (Seyfert, 2012) took the stance that affects are not within a physical body or an atmosphere, but rather are the results of social encounters of various bodies, emerging through transmissions, interactions, and encounters.

One idea to consider is if emotion and affect exist simultaneously and interchangeably and are not owned by any one body or group. Brennan (2004) claimed that we are not self-contained in terms of our energies, that there is no secure distinction between the individual and the environment (p. 6). If there is no secure distinction between the individual and the environment, then how can there be a secure distinction between emotion and affect? Traditional emotion theorizing claimed that the emotion comes from inside the person and is experienced through moods and feelings (e.g., Anderson & Guerrero, 1998). Considering the autonomy of affect in terms of its degrees of openness, the emotion of an individual is only the individual's emotion as long as it escapes the body, likely in verbal form. If an individual is low on the hypothetical "openness scale," then the emotion remains trapped within their person and thus is never recognized as an emotion by others, nor would the emotion flow into a social affect. If an individual is high on this "openness scale," then to what extent do they contain their own emotions rather than existing as merely an emotional parasite?

It is easy to conceive of emotion as owned by the individual and affect as owned by the group (in this case, the NPO), but once ideas of the communicative construction of experiences of emotion are added, the lines become blurred and emotional theorizing becomes far less simple. This guides the current work by complicating who owns emotion. Another way to complicate this discussion is by considering how emotion/affect is experienced.

<u>Experience of Emotion/Affect</u>

Massumi (1995) discussed the experience of affect in terms of *primacy*. He claims that the primacy of the affective is a gap between content and effect and also a gap between the form of content and intensity (p. 85). Massumi elaborated on a video showed to children and how they perceived the contents of the video based on different prompts: visuals, nonverbals, and verbal communications. The primacy of affect, or the gap between content and effect, is a crucial ground for understanding how one experiences emotion/affect. It should be considered not because it can distort the experience, but because it can enable a different connectivity, a "different difference," in parallel (Massumi, 1995, p. 85).

These different differences occur to the individual in three ways: 1) as an unconscious affect; 2) as an immediate awareness of reality; and 3) through self-conscious experience of affect as *affect* (Figlerowicz, 2012). Similarly, Massumi claimed three closely related items about how individuals experience affect: 1) affect is non-conscious, 2) that body and brain responses precede consciousness (cognition and awareness) and therefore can be neatly separated, and 3) that body and brain responses are beyond representation and cultural sense-making and are hence autonomous (Wetherell, 2012, p. 61). Combining Massumi's psychobiological ideas and Figlerowicz's discussion of the relationship between conscious and unconscious processing, it seems that the discussion of emotional labor, intelligence, and regulation (e.g., Cameron & Payne, 2011; Grandey, 2000) nicely intersect here, for it describes how aware an individual is of their emotions and indicates how they self-monitor. This relates to this study by supposing that nonprofit workers may also combine elements of traditional emotional theorizing (e.g., labor, intelligence, regulation) into the conscious and unconscious processes of affect when communicatively constructing emotion.

Figlerowicz (2012) stated, “There is a special relationship between our capacity to be conscious and our capacity to have emotions or feelings” (p. 5). Recognizing one’s own emotions or affects is a precarious situation involving ideas of subconscious and conscious activity. Arguably one can recognize and be conscious of their emotions only after their effects exist for a half second. Notably identified as Massumi’s half-second gap, a stimulation of emotion is felt only if it lasted more than half a second, “the minimum perceivable lapse” (p. 89). This means that humans absorb external impulses more quickly than can be perceived, the human body reacting before the effect registers on the brain. In the workplace, thousands of affective stimuli approach the individual throughout the day, even more so in times of high stress and activity. Perhaps part of the atmosphere that we cannot put our fingers on in an organization is in these mysterious half-second gaps, a black hole of organizational theorizing. This hard-to-define space (after all, we only know what we know) may be the formidable and foundational component to understanding organizing and how emotions and affects are experienced.

Another conceptualization of how emotions and affects are experienced is through the transmission of affect. Teresa Brennan (2004) coined the transmission of affect as an atmosphere, where the environment can literally get into the individual (p. 1). This problematizes the ownership question of emotion/affect by theorizing that the emotion/affect is really its own entity and fundamentally un-ownable. Brennan (2004) claimed that the transmission of affect is social in origin but biological and physical in effect, which matches the ideas of those who came before her. However, as Wetherell (2012) argued, Brennan's transmission of affect is unable to explain the limits of affective contagion and the crucial sociality of affective communication. Instead of leaving the argument to "mean simply that the emotions or affects of one person, and the enhancing or depressing energies these affects entail can enter into another" (p. 3), Wetherell (2012) asked to push further into how affect is shared.

Furthermore, Massumi (1995) compared and contrasted emotion and affect. I wholeheartedly base my conceptualizations of emotion and affect in his theorization and claims that emotion is qualified intensity, or the "conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning" (p. 88). Considering the comparisons and contrasts of ownership and the individual's experience of affect and emotion, I aim to understand how each are socially constructed through communication by drawing on affect theory.

The base of my discussion rests on social identity theory, emotion, and affect theory, not the motivation to prove or disprove the uniqueness of NPOs. Some organizational scholars tend to frame NPOs as separate and distinct from other sectors (e.g., Barman, 2002; Handy et al., 2008; Suarez, 2011). Instead, my motivation in elaborating theoretical alternatives is to shift focus from the nonprofit organiza*tion* toward the unique ways nonprofit workers engage in organiz*ing.* While conceptualizing communication as a method of constructing realities, and identity as constructed through social interactions of emotion and affect within nonprofit organizations, I offer two research questions to guide my study:

RQ 1: *How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning the nature of nonprofit work?*

RQ 2: *How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers?*

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

In order to understand how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotions regarding nonprofit work and their relationships, the nonprofit worker’s perspective is critical. I originally sought out participant observation methods for data collection and quickly realized the matter I was attempting to observe was not observable. Recognizing that the communicative construction of emotions is generally not visually recognizable, I conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with 17 nonprofit workers. Spending time with participants prior to conducting the interviews provided a level of comfort from participants that I would not have otherwise had. This comfortability and rapport was necessary because our interview conversations discussed personal and emotional matters. After conducting the interviews, I examined each interview transcript through an iterative approach, made sense of the data through emotion coding (e.g., Saldaña, 2013), and identified emerging themes.

Methodological Orientation

My primary focus in conducting research is to understand participant perspectives. As a constructionist/interpretivist, I seek to uncover constructed notions of affective and emotive elements. I claim a constructionist paradigm and interpretive methodological orientation, which claims, “We can know the natural world, not only by the scientific method and the verifiability principle of meaning, but through our consciousness” (Laible, 2000). By talking with participants about their experiences of emotion, I am able to better understand emotion, their construction of emotion, and their communicatively constructed realities through their perspectives.

Methodological Approach

In this study, I initially intended to do participant observation by volunteer coordinating for MIA, the Mental Illness Alliance. I interned as the volunteer coordinator for 3 months and continued my volunteering for 5 more months. During this time, I built relationships and developed rapport that led to an understanding of the nuances of the participants and a background of the organization.

After the internship period, I identified that participant observation in this setting did not lend itself to a thorough understanding of the participants, nor their constructed realities regarding nonprofit work, so I adopted qualitative interviews as the primary data source.

Description of Research Site (MIA)

I conducted interviews with nonprofit workers at a single NPO in a western state. The nonprofit sector in the state has the highest rates of volunteering in the United States (Volunteering & Civic Life in America), the highest rates of charitable giving in the United States (Fessler, 2012), and a very vibrant nonprofit community. MIA (Mental Illness Alliance) is a medium-sized NPO and a member of the state's umbrella nonprofit organization. Through the work of about 17 in-office staff and over 400 volunteers throughout the state, MIA aims to serve people with mental illness and loved ones of those with mental illness. Many MIA employees and volunteers themselves live with mental illness and so provide unique support by those affected by mental illness. The central location is the main office that serves 14 volunteer-organized affiliate locations throughout the state. The main office is the "hub" of MIA, and is also a member of the national MIA organization along with other sister-locations at various states throughout the country.

Since the beginning of my involvement with MIA in May 2012, the organization has experienced drastic turnover: six paid staff members left the organization; five of these positions have been filled by external hires, one has been filled with an internal promotion. While analyzing data for RQ1, I received notification that four positions would soon become vacant, including the programs coordinator and executive director positions. In addition, volunteer tracking is a challenge in this organization because many affiliate locations do not have access to reporting technologies. This results in an evolving and unpredictable number of volunteers who serve MIA. This organization provides a unique platform for the study of emotion due to its focus on mental illness (inherently an emotional subject), frequent turnover, and organizational transition.

MIA offers many education classes and support groups to those struggling with mental illness and their loved ones. MIA employees and volunteers teach and facilitate these classes, and several have participated in these groups as clients. There are about eight programs, six education-based and two support-based. The programs are designed to educate, support, and reach people of all ages who have mental illnesses and their family members, and often take place at community centers or public locations. The classes are offered throughout the state through the 14 affiliate locations.

MIA employees and volunteers tend to communicate their experiences through distinct terminology. To clarify, a “consumer” is a person living with mental illness and a “mentor” is a paid worker at the main office who handles phone calls and helps those with mental illness and their family members through their experiences. “Affiliates” are locations throughout the state, but the term can also be used to describe a group of people, similar to how the word “organization” can refer to a place and a group of people. Participants refer to the central office of MIA as the “state office,” and this main location is where PWs work. When a participant describes a coteacher, they refer to their teaching or facilitating partner for the program they lead through MIA. Additionally, the “board” may refer to the Board of Directors at the MIA main office *or* the Board of Directors for each individual affiliate location. The main office has several departments, including the mentors, programs, and outreach.

The study of emotion in this particular nonprofit is connected to the motivation of the participants and the cause of the organization. Almost all participants in this study explicitly describe their own relationship to mental illness (either their own diagnosis or their family members’) and many describe benefitting from the organization as a client prior to their volunteer or paid experience. The relationship between participants and the cause of the nonprofit (serving those with mental illness) can be generalized to other types of NPOs, where volunteers and paid workers engage with the organization because of the cause, perhaps because their lives have been affected by the cause.

<u>Data Collection</u>

Data were collected over a span of 9 months and came primarily from qualitative interviews. I conducted 17 in-depth qualitative interviews with MIA volunteers and employees. I also gathered background information about the organization through my personal involvement as volunteer coordinator. During this time frame, I gathered contextual information about the structure, history, programs, and purpose of the organization. I also established relationships with many future participants.

Participants

Within the organization, there are different types of involvement. Using purposive sampling, I interviewed 7 employees, 4 office volunteers, and 6 remote volunteers. Distinguishing between worker types provides valuable insight into nonprofit workers' communicative constructions of emotion in NPOs. In combination, I interviewed 13 females and 4 males. For the sake of confidentiality, all participants are referred to as female. The average age of participants is 45 years, ranging from 23 to 73. I gained access to participants either through my own connection or by obtaining their information from a key informant, an employee in the organization. I used this to demonstrate my credibility as a researcher to the participants because they personally knew me or knew me through a close connection with the informant.

I conducted four interviews with office volunteers. The office volunteers are those who volunteer primarily at the main office or at events organized by the main office. Three office volunteer participants serve as event-based volunteers and are involved with MIA as episodic volunteers (Lewis, 2005), meaning that they serve sporadically rather than on a regular schedule. One office volunteer participant is an office-based volunteer and serves as a periodic volunteer (Lewis, 2005), who donates time on a regular schedule.

I conducted seven interviews with employees, or paid workers. The paid workers are defined by their employment status, as those who receive financial compensation for their work. All paid worker participants primarily work at the main office, though some tasks occur outside of the central location. The paid workers come from an array of organizational departments.

I conducted six interviews with remote volunteers. The remote volunteers are defined as those who volunteer throughout the state at the 14 affiliate locations. All remote volunteer participants have served or currently serve on the Board of Directors at their respective affiliates. The remote volunteers are geographically dispersed throughout the northern portion of the state; no two participants volunteer with the same affiliate.

Procedures

Over a time span of 6 weeks, I conducted an in-depth qualitative interview with each participant. I prepared interview guides for each participant based on their type of involvement with the organization. Upon the permission of each participant, interviews were audio-recorded. For confidentiality and anonymity, participants were given the option to choose their own pseudonym; 13 participants chose their own pseudonym and 4 participants were assigned a pseudonym. The organization, events, and programs were also given pseudonyms to further protect confidentiality and participant privacy. The average interview length was 40.5 minutes long, totaling 689.5 minutes in sum. Each audio file was transcribed. One participant answered interview questions as a survey, which was added to interview transcriptions, totaling 244 pages of interview transcripts.

Interviews

In-depth qualitative interviews were used to understand nonprofit workers' constructions of their emotion in relation to the nature of nonprofit work and their relationships with other nonprofit workers. Overall, the interview questions for each type of involvement were similar, with some differentiation in the phrasing of questions. All interviews sought to understand communicative constructions of emotion in nonprofit work at MIA, their relationships with other nonprofit workers, and their interpretations of emotions. Each participant interview was guided by an interview schedule designed based on their type of involvement. Uniquely, remote volunteers were asked if their distance from the main office affected them. Interview guides for office volunteers, paid workers, and remote volunteers are included in Appendices A, B, and C, respectively.

Data Analysis

Over a time span of 4 weeks, I conducted analysis of interview transcripts with qualitative coding software, NVivo 9. Using the constant comparative method as described by Strauss and Corbin (1990), I open-coded all interview transcripts during first-round coding. Using NVivo 9, I coded each transcript with particular nodes that belong under the subject category of each research question. My paradigmatic views required constant self-reflexivity, and I wrote analytic thoughts throughout the analysis. At second-round coding, I used affective methods, including emotion and values coding (Saldaña, 2013). This led to a quantitative figure, included in the results chart at the beginning of Chapter 4. Though these same codes led to a collection of quantifiable numbers for RQ2, the results here are written by participant-type rather than by reference to a subject. Therefore, the numbers are omitted from the second chart (at the beginning of Chapter 5).

Specifically, using emotion and values coding, after reviewing each transcript a series of times, I used a function on NVivo 9 to show me which ideas were the most referenced. The top three on this list included events, mission, and job responsibilities, which largely inform the findings of theme 1 and the Question Words Model (reviewed later). I examined the references and found that most references to events came from office volunteers (OVs), most references to the mission and organizational purpose came from remote volunteers (RVs), and most references to job responsibilities/tasks came from paid workers (PWs). Of course, there was some overlap, but a quantifiable analysis using NVivo 9 led to this particular finding. Each subsequent node ultimately fit within these three broader ideas.

Additionally, my personal views on analysis include an emphasis on examining everything as initially important. I consider all data useful and relevant and my coding is a product of this belief. As I coded, I had over 100 nodes for each research question. With this approach, I simply used NVivo 9 as a tool to help me sort through my qualitative data. What I had not done early on was consider the importance of the surrounding *context* of the statement. After using NVivo 9 to reach this point, I hand-wrote and drew the context of each node. For example, rather than just saying paid workers (PWs) were frustrated, I needed to investigate *why* and *how* they were frustrated. Was it because of their coworkers or because of the volunteers? Was it because of their job responsibilities and requirements? Taking the data out of NVivo 9 and putting it on paper allowed me to sort through these ideas with the context in mind. With this method of data analysis, I engaged in qualitative lumping and fracturing simultaneously to sift through the 17 transcripts. I revisited each node several times and compared and contrasted, and using an iterative process, reexamined each idea, and grouped them into significant findings and themes that led to the results.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF RQ1

Through data collection and analysis, three themes answer each research question. The results for RQ1 are displayed in Table 4.1.

Themes 1 and 2 lead into theme 3; they inform and build into the framework of theme 3. Each theme broadly frames the findings by categorizing each based on their relationship to the theme. Theme 1 answers RQ1 by stating that nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning nonprofit work by first *defining* their nonprofit. Findings in the *defining* theme include features of the organization that are unique to MIA. Theme 2 answers RQ1 by stating that nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning nonprofit work by subsequently *contextualizing* their nonprofit. Findings in the *contextualizing* theme include features of the organization that are common to nonprofits. Finally, theme 3 answers RQ1 by stating that nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning nonprofit work by experiencing their emotion

Table 4.1- Research Question 1 Results

Research Question 1: How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning the nature of nonprofit work?

Theme 1	**Defining MIA**	**# of Occurrences**
	Job Responsibilities	*35*
	Funding	*50*
	Organizational Change	*14*
	Raising Awareness as NAMI Purpose	*25*
	Maintaining Confidentiality	*9*
	Suggesting Improvement	*6*
Theme 2	**Contextualizing MIA**	
	"Volunteer Organization"	*11*
	Funding Constraints as Feature of Nonprofits	*12*
	Understanding Emotional Connection to Nonprofits	*4*
Theme 3	**Constructing Emotion**	*90*

through defining and contextualizing their nonprofit. Findings in the emotion theme include explicit and implicit instances of emotion concerning the administrative and operational aspects of nonprofit work. Defining and contexualizing lead into theme 3, serving as foundations to the emotional connections.

As I present the results and analysis for RQ1, I define the theme and describe the findings by drawing on similarities and differences between and among office volunteers (OVs), paid workers (PWs), and remote volunteers (RVs). This distinction compares and contrasts each worker type as they experience the same organization in complex ways.

While themes 1 and 2 illuminate theme 3, in combination, the three themes inform each type of worker's main focus on the organization. OVs primarily focus on events, PWs emphasize job features and organizational structure, and RVs concentrate on mission-based organizational programs. While there is some overlap in these three areas, analysis leads to the suggestion that the focus of OVs on events informs the *what* of MIA, PWs' emphasis on job features and organizational structure explains the *how* of MIA, and the concentration of RVs on mission-based MIA programs describes the *why* of MIA.

Theme 1: Defining MIA

Nonprofit workers explain MIA many different ways. For each nonprofit worker type, defining the organization provides insight into how they experience and perceive the purpose of the organization. Nonprofit workers define MIA through six notions: job responsibilities, funding, organizational change including physical relocation and turnover, raising awareness as organizational mission, maintaining confidentiality, and suggesting improvement.

Job Responsibilities

Defining the job responsibilities of nonprofit work is one way that nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion. One interview question asked participants to describe their title and their work, and participants mostly described their formal responsibilities. For example, one PW said,

> I provide information and resources as well as support when needed to people . . . whether they're family members or whether they're individuals who live with a mental illness . . . and those are the primary job responsibilities (Stephanie).

In addition to formal responsibilities, participants define their duties by sharing stories and experiences. "There's a guy in [community club] that I play Scrabble with like almost every time, he was so excited to do that" (Brooke).

Office Volunteers

Office volunteers discreetly discuss their job responsibilities. They describe their volunteer tasks implicitly as operational, through helping with various events. One volunteer, Judy, describes helping with several events. "I've done two [Run/Walks] with them and a little bit of helping with the [Symposiums] . . . I'm just a volunteer presenting beautiful events." There are many events they relate their job duties to, including the annual Run/Walk Fundraiser, the Classic Bike Tour, the State Symposium, Community Connection, and others.

Paid Workers

Paid workers describe their job responsibilities primarily as administrative. Their tasks include administration over subordinates, events and programs, and data related to events and programs. Subordinates include any person hierarchically "under" the paid worker. For instance, Dawn explains her responsibilities by saying, "My job title is the program manager . . . I administer and direct the activities that are part of that plan." Leah also describes her responsibilities by saying, "We're always scrambling to find them [volunteers] something to do, we're never quite sure when they're coming." Implicitly, this describes a responsibility over the volunteers, an implicit description of job responsibilities.

Remote Volunteers

The RVs describe their job responsibilities primarily as operational. In contrast to OVs however, RVs explicitly define their job responsibilities as operational by discussing their experiences teaching or facilitating programs and responding to crisis calls:

> So I got a phone call because my number is available . . . and I got a phone call from a adult with mental illness, and they're in crisis on the phone . . . so I'm able to talk to them (Olivia).

Administrative responsibilities also allow RVs to define the organization, but all administration focuses on their affiliate location rather than the main office. Caroline describes her administrative tasks, "Pretty much what I help is to coordinate the different educational programs and support programs that we offer in MIA in [this] county."

Funding

Different types of nonprofit workers focus on different aspects of organizational funding and consequently construct the organization and their emotion concerning nonprofit work. Under the broader frame of funding, participants describe organizational funding constraints, organizational fundraising, and compensation.

Office Volunteers

OVs identify administrative functions of funding. They define MIA's funding primarily as a means to support the PWs in the form of compensation. They also express a desire to fundraise for the organization, but lack depth in understanding the underlying funding constraints of MIA. For example, Kanale describes her desire to fundraise for the organization:

> We would not only raise awareness of depression, suicide, and mental illness . . . [but also] . . . to donate the proceeds from the [Classic Bike Tour] to an organization . . . that [are] involved in helping people that [are] suffering with these symptoms.

OVs do not express knowledge of the depth of the funding constraint MIA experiences.

<u>Paid Workers</u>

PWs demonstrate an understanding that obtaining funding is part of their job responsibilities. Their perception of obtaining funding (administrative task) through grants and fundraising is for the purpose of providing resources to support RVs operational responsibilities. “I was proud . . . in writing a grant about the mentoring program, it was a good grant, it was. It was well-written and it sounded good,” Leah describes using her administrative duties to benefit successful programs. PWs also identify that their compensation is supplemented by emotional rewards, such as love, joy, passion, and fulfillment. Ellen alluded to this early on in our interview, “That’s what motivates me, I just had that drive I guess. Just my love for people, basically.” She further exemplified this when she said:

> I don’t make enough, I don’t think, according to the energy that I put in, but the energy that I put in is all from love, so [my paycheck] doesn’t influence me at all because I just love it, you know?

Remote Volunteers

Equally focused on administrative and operational types of funding, RVs demonstrate an understanding of organizational funding constraints, need to fundraise, and PWs compensation. Midnightsun explains her understanding by saying, "They're working on a reduced budget, k? And as a, I was a CFO for a long time so I understand what [they're] dealing with." Olivia mirrors this, "The one part of MIA right now is there are budget constraints I think, I'm getting that feeling, I'm finding materials aren't as readily available as they used to be." Uniquely, RVs identify funding needs at both the affiliate level and the state level. For instance, Olivia also describes her own affiliate funding constraint, "The person before me used all of that money to take all the consumers out to Christmas dinner once a year and that's why the money wasn't figuring."

Organizational Change

Participants discuss features of organizational change in three ways: physical office relocation, organizational growth, and turnover. In 2012, MIA relocated from an office in a downtown location to a new office space in a neighboring suburb. Several PWs and OVs refer to this physical change, but in varying degrees. Organizational growth includes development, usually at the affiliate level. Turnover, or the process of workers leaving their position and others filling their place, relates to the main office. Turnover expresses a type of organizational change, referring to the personnel that staff the organization. Organizational change, growth, and turnover are features of MIA that participants define and use to express their emotion concerning nonprofit work.

Office Volunteers

OVs do not explicitly define the ways organizational changes influence MIA. There is a sense of understanding that the organization has changed, but no direct elaboration on its effects. For instance, one event-based volunteer describes her experience, “Last year we partnered with a program called [Classic Bike Tour] which was promoted from the national level . . . [Classic Bike Tour] called it quits after two years . . . that experience was the catalyst for moving forward this year.” This demonstrates knowledge that the organization has adjusted, but does not demonstrate how the change affects the organization. In addition, OVs discuss organizational change through the physical office relocation and through PWs’ turnover. OVs identify the office relocation because some of them volunteer at the office and because their primary responsibilities provide support to PWs. Moving from an old location to a new location is an obvious physical change to the organization for OVs and PWs. One volunteer, Judy, elaborates on the transition:

> It was very dark, they were in a basement of a building and . . . it felt below ground . . . the halls were very narrow and it was just so dark in there . . . it was really bad . . . the fact now they have windows and they get that daylight, things changed . . . the other place was depressing.

OVs also define the organization by discussing the turnover of PWs. They understand that turnover is likely, because it has been a recent trend in MIA and because OVs typically work with specific PWs. Contrary to most PWs, OVs describe turnover, but do not describe how it affects the overall environment of the organization. For example, Shawni explains:

> There's been people changes [sic] but not really a change in environments. I think when you have nonprofit and you have an organization who's whole purpose is to help people, the environment is usually one of gratitude . . . it hasn't really changed even though people have changed.

Paid Workers

PWs define MIA by demonstrating an understanding that organizational change at the main office occurs through professionalization, role transitions, turnover, and refer back to the office relocation. PWs describe the features of organizational change by explaining how the change affects the environment and how they complete their responsibilities.

Professionalization occurs through structural changes that involve formalization. PWs identify a change in environment caused by professionalism, including a sense of disconnectedness and low morale. For instance, as a result of structural changes to the organization, London describes feeling disconnected, “I think setting up that system makes it seem a little bit more like that so it makes me feel a little bit more disconnected.” PWs also identify professionalization as a change that has influenced how they complete their job responsibilities. Ellen reflects:

> I can remember when we would just keep track of our time on a piece of paper, and then . . . we finally got the time clock. And now we’ve moved up in the world and now we do it on the Internet.

In this organization, PWs often held other positions before their current position. They use the transition to understand organizational change. For example, Leah describes her transition from one position to another, “It was interesting to start as a peer . . . and then to get promoted . . . and then to be [a] supervisor . . . was a strange adjustment for me.” This type of role transition is a type of organizational change that influences the PWs because it causes them to adapt when changes occur.

PWs tend to expect turnover. They understand that nonprofits have high turnover rates, but in contrast to the OVs, PWs identify a “low morale” or negative change in environment when turnover occurs more frequently. One PW, Leah, describes her experience during a period of high turnover:

> We kept losing people [and] we lost a few more before we were able to start slowly adding people back on. And that was really, it was a challenge to keep the office staffed and . . . morale was really low.

In addition to turnover in the past, PWs also expect turnover in the future. One PW admits, “I don’t think I’m going to be here forever or even for too much longer, I don’t think anybody here does it for the money.” Another PW, London, anticipates other PWs leaving the organization:

> We foster a lot of really good individuals here, it’s a nice training ground . . . for other opportunities in the same way. It makes me a little bit like, don’t be too great because somebody will wanna steal you!

When PWs foresee future turnover as organizational change, it creates a climate that involves turnover and necessitates quick adaptation.

The relocation of the office and physical features of the new office are important for PWs, as their physical surroundings concretely affect their relationships and their mood. PWs describe physical features of the new location, including walls, light, physical nearness to other PWs, and space. Penny talks about the light, “I have the windows and . . . it brings in the light, figuratively and metaphorically.” Dawn explains physical nearness, “When you’re in close proximity to somebody, meaning you share an office with, [then] there is more emotional communication than when you're in your own office by yourself with the door closed."

Remote Volunteers

RVs discuss organizational change through organizational growth. Mostly, the organizational change influences their affiliate as the Board of Directors grows in size. In addition to quantitative growth, participants mark organizational change through growth in outreach programs. Midnightsun elaborates on outreach in the community, "We're involved on campus clubs, at [the university] and [the college] . . . it's growth, it's a culmination of a year's worth of work."

Considering the main office relocation and turnover, RVs do not discuss the office relocation, but do describe turnover at the main office. RVs suppose that turnover at the main office is caused by effects of mental illness, and so express sympathy for PWs. For example, Newyork processes PWs' turnover:

> Through [my time], there have been some paid workers . . . that I may not have thought in the past were efficient. I really got humbled through that process because some of them were not doing well at the time . . . there's been a turnover at the state office and there always is because people either move or you get burned out.

Newyork perceives the turnover at the main office as caused by effects of mental illness and so expresses her own humility as she learned about those situations.

Raising Awareness as Organizational Purpose

The mission of MIA is "To ensure the dignity and improve the lives of those who live with mental illness and their families through support, education, and advocacy." Considering this organizational mission or purpose, organizing is framed around these ideas. The idea of raising awareness is not explicitly written in MIA's mission statement, but it is the central focus of volunteers and paid workers at MIA. Raising awareness, described by the participants, includes teaching others about mental illness and behavioral issues through MIA programs and events. In general, raising awareness educates others about mental health at biological and relational levels. All worker types identify raising awareness, but only RVs describe awareness raising as one *part* of the overarching purpose of the organization.

Office Volunteers

Though not referred to explicitly, OVs primarily raise awareness through events. They discuss the cause of the organization as raising awareness, and so enact the organizational purpose through the events with which they help. In particular, OVs raise awareness by advocating for education through many events like the State Symposium, the Run/Walk Fundraiser, and legislative events.

Paid Workers

Similar to OVs, PWs only identify raising awareness as part of the organizational mission. Rather than operational forms of awareness-raising, like through events, PWs describe their role in raising awareness as administrative support. For example, Dawn explains, "Mine is more up a level or two and is kind of administrative, but when I hear of stories, successes, that are in part by the use of resources that we offer, then that's meaningful." PWs use their administrative roles to provide support for other workers who are raising awareness of mental illness operationally, through events and programs.

Remote Volunteers

RVs identify the mission of MIA by describing functions of comfort, encouragement, and awareness raising. For instance, Midnightsun refers to working hands-on with clients, "We tend to celebrate even the smallest of victories. We celebrate the smallest reports in the same way and provide that encouragement." Framing raising awareness as *part* of the organizational mission indicates that

RVs perceive the purpose of the organization as multifaceted. Specifically, RVs raise awareness through their affiliate outreach and programs. Contrary to OVs, RVs use many types of operations: events and programs, and contrary to PWs, RVs identify three parts of the organizational purpose: comfort, encouragement, and raising awareness.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Working within an organization that is surrounded by issues of mental health, including mental illness, maintaining confidentiality is important. Confidentiality involves keeping personal and private matters reserved and its maintenance supposes long-term relationships. At MIA, maintaining confidentiality typically means guarding mental illness diagnoses. To protect clients, volunteers, and paid workers, OVs, PWs, and RVs at MIA identify the effects of maintaining confidentiality in different ways, thereby defining the organization in diverse ways.

Office Volunteers

OVs do not discuss maintaining confidentiality, and instead focus on other elements of nonprofit organizing. I elaborate on this finding in the analysis section.

Paid Workers

Maintaining confidentiality surfaces in two ways for PWs: as a feature of their job, and by expressing that confidentiality is maintained at work and at home. For example, when talking about a bad day, Ellen says, "But that turns out good anyway because I go home and talk to my husband about it to get it off my shoulders. Of course I don't tell him names or anything like that . . ." This exemplifies the stress PWs sometimes experience and one avenue of processing their work, by discussing it outside of work with a loved one. Even outside of work, an emphasis is placed on maintaining confidentiality of clients, volunteers, and PWs.

Remote Volunteers

Contrary to OVs and PWs, RVs discuss maintaining confidentiality in more emotional terms: conflict and trust. When asked to recall a time they felt tension with an OV, PW, or other RV, RVs tend to discuss conflicts related to a breach in confidentiality. For example, Caroline shares a moment of conflict:

> I had an experience, it was a volunteer, um, one of the main things of MIA is that it is absolutely confidential. And even though I know it was done in a tried-to-help way, I received one call asking me if I thought my husband was having a manic episode because of the way he was behaving . . . that was breaking confidentiality and anonymity.

In addition to tension, RVs use maintaining confidentially as a way to build trust with clients within programs. For example, Midnightsun elaborates on the purpose of maintaining confidentiality, "They've shared information with each other that they've never shared with anybody else . . . and they know that it's confidential and they can trust individuals with that information, they've made themselves vulnerable."

Suggesting Improvement

One finding includes participants expressing a desire to improve the organization. Different types of nonprofit workers suggest different types of change, but no participant elaborated with ideas for procedural improvement. The idea of improvement is general and exists at the main office and affiliate levels.

Office Volunteers

Similar to findings related to maintaining confidentiality, OVs do not describe organizational improvement. I discuss this finding within the following analysis section.

Paid Workers

PWs suggest organizational improvement in terms of creating structure. For instance, one PW said, "MIA lacks so much infrastructure that I think it’s a lot of good people trying so hard to do really really great work and most of the time doing that without really needing a framework.” To this participant, creating a framework would benefit the workers at the main office, including volunteers and interns. She continues, “It’s a little chaotic to give especially the interns a meaningful experience, but I also think that is an organizational issue and not just a me problem . . . It’s a systems problem.” Through PWs’ perspective, creating a framework would benefit the PWs and the volunteers and interns at the main office.

Remote Volunteers

RVs also propose organizational improvement in terms of operational functions of the organization. Particularly, RVs suggest improvement in three ways. First, RVs express a desire to have more people be involved, as exemplified by Justme, “Where we’re all volunteers here, I just wish we could get more people involved is all, because some people, they don’t realize how much good it could do the community.” Secondly, RVs also mention ways to improve their affiliate programs, like through education, “If anything MIA could do it would be by educating people more by having education meetings more often” (Irene). Finally, RVs identify funding as one area for improvement; Olivia expresses her desire to step in:

> So I watch these kids struggle and I'm going whoa whoa. I'm sure they're missing something but I don't know what it is. I think, I could go in a meeting with them and help and maybe I would hear exactly what my ideas are and maybe they're doing them.

Through having more people involved, improving affiliate programs, and expressing a desire to help fundraising, RVs suggest improvement as one way of defining the organization.

Analysis of Theme 1: Defining MIA

Each of the six main findings works in conjunction with the others to create theme 1: nonprofit workers define the nonprofit. OVs, PWs, and RVs elaborate on their job responsibilities, funding, organizational change, raising awareness, maintaining confidentiality, and suggesting improvement in a myriad of ways. The comparison and contrasting between and among these three types of nonprofit workers provide valuable insights into how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion regarding nonprofit work.

Job Responsibilities

Identifying job responsibilities as administrative or operational allows the nonprofit worker to emotionally process their connection to the organization. Constructing guidelines related to responsibilities aims to provide clear boundaries to each job type. While some responsibilities are framed by organizational documents like formal job descriptions, others are framed informally. Regardless of formal or informal job requirements, the participant uses their job duties to emotionally relate to the organization. For the OVs, who are primarily event-based volunteers, having operational, event-based responsibilities allows for a strong emotional connection to and responsibility for the events of the organization, as Kanale explains:

> It gives an individual an opportunity to do something for those who suffer, either who have passed on, or who are currently battling mental illness. For example, last year, we had a father and his son ride a tandem bike. The boy rode with a picture of his sister taped to his handlebars. She had been taken by suicide only months before. When they heard about our ride, they had to be a part of it. There are many similar stories . . . there is a power that draws people to this event because of its cause, because of the emotion.

For PWs, identifying tasks primarily as administrative indicates a level of professionalism and formality indicative of a different emotional connection to the organization. By taking on a support role through administratively managing programs, data, and subordinates, the OVs and RVs can then pursue their operational responsibilities. For RVs, identifying with mostly operational responsibilities allows an emotional connection to the organization’s clients, who require the front-line emotional support.

Funding Constraints

The emotional stress of nonprofit workers can be high due to the work itself (e.g., a mentor taking a crisis call) as well as other factors such as funding constraints. Particularly for PWs and RVs, an understanding of and responsibility toward organizational funding influences the emotional connection to the organization because it ultimately deals with the organization's success. OVs tend to support all fundraising efforts of the main office, but do not demonstrate a depth of knowledge in the importance of funding in MIA or in NPOs in general. Conversely, PWs and RVs tend to understand the underlying funding importance with a realization that without proper funding, the organization may dissolve. This bears much weight on PWs' and RVs' relationships to the organization, as so many are emotionally invested in the organization through their own experiences.

Organizational Change, Growth, and Turnover

Organizational change through office relocation, organizational growth, and turnover are features of the organization that influence how one experiences the organization. OVs tend to focus on the effects organizational change have on the PWs, while PWs focus on a change in environment. RVs are notably quiet about the main office relocation and the features of the new location. A change in location does not influence RVs because their attention is centered on their own affiliate. Any change (staff or location) would not directly affect RVs. Identifying various features of change within the organization aids in defining the organization and consequently how participants emotionally experience the organization and nonprofit work.

Raising Awareness as Part of Organizational Purpose

No interview question explicitly asked participants to identify the mission or purpose of the organization. This was intentionally unasked to leave room to see if and how participants experienced MIA's purpose in noticeable ways. While the OVs and PWs share similarities here, they also differ in purpose. OVs describe only the event and PWs describe the event, planning, and structure of the events. RVs express awareness raising as part of the organizational purpose alongside comfort and encouragement. I expected this elaboration from RVs because they received these emotional benefits as consumers or as family members themselves. While many PWs express being involved with the organization as a client prior to their employment (no OV identifies this relationship), they primarily function administratively in this organization. RVs occupy administrative and operational roles in relation to their affiliate and by facilitating and teaching their own MIA classes and programs. Their understanding of the organizational purpose is many-sided, whereas OVs and PWs primarily only focus on one side.

Maintaining Confidentiality

While maintaining confidentiality is a formal requirement of MIA job responsibilities, it is also one organizational aspect participants use to define the organization. Ultimately, through upholding confidentiality, participants protect the trust and confidence of clients, other volunteers, and other PWs. When dealing with mental illness, the necessary maintaining of private matters builds confidence, comfort, and trust toward the organization's programs and functions. Building trust and confidence through these means provides grounds for clients and others to seek support from members of the organization. Notably, the OVs do not refer to maintaining confidentially. This seems reasonable as none of the OVs participants are involved in MIA programs currently nor have they been in the past. This suggests that they may not understand the importance or function of maintaining confidentiality.

Suggesting Improvement

Often times, organizational bonding and conflict occur simultaneously. When experiencing difficult situations, nonprofit workers identify areas for development and thus define the organization as needing improvement. Structure, funding, and growth are three suggestions for improvement made by the participants but the improvements are typically constrained because of their nature in NPOs. Each area for improvement that the RVs suggest come from three different RVs. This implies that RVs have a broader understanding of the organization, including the state and affiliate levels and administrative and operational functions of each. OVs do not suggest improvements, which suggests that they only experience a segment of what the organization does, and thus do not evaluate what they do not know. Experiencing a desire to change these features seems to draw the participants closer to the organization, the same way that two students bond together in a particularly difficult class.

Theme 2: Contextualizing MIA

Moving beyond defining the organization, nonprofit workers also contextualize the organization. Situating the organization in relation or contrast to NPOs as a whole occurs in three ways: through explaining that the organization is a volunteer organization, by identifying a funding constraint as a feature of nonprofits, and by demonstrating an awareness of the connection between emotion and NPOs.

Volunteer Organization

In MIA, participants relate to the organization by contextualizing it as a volunteer organization. This includes ideas that the organization is run by volunteers and that without volunteers, the organization would not exist. This is important because it suggests that participants understand how MIA operates.

Office Volunteers

OVs do not refer to MIA as a volunteer organization, nor do they contextualize the organization otherwise. They do not elaborate on *how* the nonprofit work is accomplished, though they are likely the largest group of people who accomplish the operational work. Rather, one OV expresses a flexible definition of "volunteer" while reflecting on an experience at a local art class:

> I went to present . . . and in the afternoon class, this man had . . . he stood up and started telling his story in front of everyone, and you hear the silence come over the room, it's one of those moments like nobody asked him to do that . . . he just stood up and wanted to share that with everybody . . . he was a volunteer in a sense.

I discuss this further in the following analysis section.

Paid Workers

PWs describe the organization as a volunteer organization in three ways. PWs either do not engage in framing the organization within the sector, they identify the organization as a volunteer organization in order to demonstrate collaborative efforts, or they do so subtly to express an adaptation to sector-wide funding constraints. For example, London shares a proud moment due to collaborative efforts:

> So the days I've felt the best are really the days when we've had a collaborative effort come together . . . rarely it is that I've accomplished something fantastic on my own, but it's much more often that we as an organization have just done really well.

Other PWs implicitly describe a use of volunteers and their work in order to adapt to funding constraints, like Josie says, "I make it a point to be kind and to learn all of their names and say thank you because without them we would be nothing." Similarly, when asked about how she feels about MIA's volunteers, Stephanie stated, "I think they're a really quality group of people, and obviously we wouldn't survive without them, they're an integral part of what we do." Though not explicit, the idea of being nothing without volunteers suggests that volunteers are needed for the purpose of doing work that other workers cannot based on time and funding constraints.

Remote Volunteers

RVs discuss MIA as a volunteer organization in two ways. First, RVs conceptualize the organization as separate from other types of organizations. For example, Midnightsun reflects on her past experiences, “I bring that from the professional world of thirty years’ experience, and I do that here with the volunteer organization in the same way.” This suggests that RVs perceive that MIA is not part of the professional world, and that RVs participate in some other realm. Second, RVs express a notion that everyone is a volunteer. Newyork relates this in contrast to other roles participants have, “You know, we’re all volunteers, but we’re all passionate about what we do. We’re either caretakers of someone, or we are the people with the mental health issue.” In addition to stating that all the people involved are volunteers, RVs describe instances of a lack of volunteer follow-through and hard work. Irene reflects on this tension, “Well the hardest thing is some of them [volunteers] not following through with their commitment and that’s because it’s a volunteer organization. And so I have to remind myself that this is strictly volunteer.” RVs use these two ways to compare and contrast MIA to other organizations, perhaps in organizations where there are direct financial consequences for lack of follow-through and hard work.

Funding Constraint as Feature of Nonprofits

The literature tells us that responding to funding constraints and budget cuts is typical for many NPOs today. This organization is no exception. Participants discuss funding constraints in three ways in order to *define* the organization: funding constraints, organizational fundraising, and compensation. They build on this to *contextualize* the organization. OVs and RVs tend to relate broadly to the funding constraints as a feature of the nonprofit sector, but PWs use the funding constraints to identify and construct their reality in the organization, one rife with burnout and turnover.

Office Volunteers

Similar to how they describe funding constraints in relation to defining the organization (theme 1), OVs identify an interest in fundraising for the organization, but only rarely elaborate on the overarching framework the fundraising fits into. “You can’t be in it for the money when it’s nonprofit,” OV Shawni said. OVs focus on event-based fundraising and express a desire to help the organization, but only in rare instances generalize funding constraints in the organization to being part of nonprofit life.

Paid Workers

PWs contextualize MIA by identifying burnout within the organization. Many PWs identify burnout as a nonprofit-wide phenomenon, typically caused by low pay. Leah explains:

> I think [of] a lot of burnout, because I think that typically nonprofits can’t, nonprofits aren’t as competitive with their

> wages as other places can be and so I think they have fewer resources to work with which impacts the employees and the volunteers, it impacts the employees so there's a lot more work to be done with fewer people and less resources.

In addition to having to navigate funding constraints, participants also express their own burnout in relation to *finding* funding for the nonprofit. London explains funding constraints as part of having a bad day:

> Um, how else do I know I've had a bad day? I think funding. Funding is always something that if we don't get something that we've been looking for, if we don't hit a deadline we're supposed to meet, then I definitely feel the weight of that.

Remote Volunteers

RVs express an acknowledgement of funding constraints at MIA as a way to define the organization, similar to OVs. Building on their defining of the organization, RVs contextualize funding constraints as a characteristic of NPOs. For instance, Caroline implicitly suggests the use of volunteers due to funding constraints:

> I think that all nonprofit organizations are trying to make a difference. And I think because we are pulling away more and more, um, funds, that's why we have to go to volunteers, and I just wish we had more funds for programs like MIA.

Understanding of Emotional Connection to Nonprofits

All participants identify a connection between emotion and NPOs. Participants were explicitly asked, "What comes to mind when you hear my study is on nonprofits and emotion?" Some participants demonstrated their understanding here, while others displayed their knowledge of the connection of emotion and nonprofits through other questions and reflections. OVs, PWs, and RVs all identify NPOs as a practical and effective way of using emotion to make a difference. One OV, Shawni explains:

> It's the central focus of nonprofit. It's what, emotion, to me, in my definition of emotion are feelings, but they are feelings that motivate you to action. And that's what MIA is . . . they think about the other side and decide, 'how can we best make changes that are of help to others?'

A PW, Josie, elaborates:

> There's a lot of emotion in nonprofits . . . especially one like this where it's based on mental illness . . . I think that what makes nonprofit organizations run is the emotion behind it . . . emotions and nonprofits are pretty intertwined I'd say.

In addition, RV Newyork elaborates on the connection:

> I'm so glad your study is on emotion . . . I don't think that you, if you didn't have any emotion . . . I would venture to say, in any nonprofit organization, if you're not invested in it, it's not going to be effective.

Analysis of Theme 2: Contextualizing MIA

Each of the three main findings informs the other and all build into theme 2, how nonprofit workers contextualize the nonprofit. The comparing and contrasting among nonprofit workers provides space for understanding the organization in its broader frame. Just as the camera lens displays only what is in the viewfinder, so does defining the organization only explain one part of the larger picture. Stepping back from the camera and looking at the landscape, or contextualizing the organization within its larger environment, provides clarity on how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning nonprofit work.

Volunteer Organization

While not all participants describe the organization as a "volunteer organization," most participants contextualize MIA within a broader frame. OVs do not allude to conceptualizing the organization as a volunteer organization, and this is intriguing. Do they know how much they are needed and appreciated as part of the organization? Perhaps an explicit acknowledgement of this from PWs and RVs would alert OVs to relate to the organization in ways beyond events and awareness raising. While OVs do not explicitly describe this feature of NPOs, PWs and RVs take no pauses in defining MIA as a volunteer organization. PWs do so in order to explain features of the organization (e.g., collaboration or adaptation), but RVs do so with mental illness in mind. Several RVs identify volunteers as lacking follow-through or not very committed, but also express a sense of tolerance or acceptance surrounding other volunteers. For instance, elaborating on her contextualization that this is a volunteer organization, Irene says, "We're all different, I was taught if you commit to something then you do it. But yeah, other individuals aren't always the same (laughter). It's touch-and-go, it's a volunteer organization, so they're not getting paid, well with money." The underlying idea is that because everyone is a volunteer for an organization that supports mental health, other volunteers experience issues of mental illness and need acceptance, tolerance, and understanding. The RVs have their own experience with mental illness (either as a consumer or family member), and accordingly understand the amount of grace needed from others especially during low or hard times.

For all participants, there is an unspoken rule that if you are involved in MIA, you either have a mental illness or you are an immediate family member of someone living with mental illness. Newyork elaborates:

> Everyone who volunteers, teaches, or works for MIA is either a family member, has someone in their family who has a mental diagnosis, or you are an individual, and those are the two categories, or else how could you possibly relate?

This creates an organization of patience, generosity, and a striving to see the best in others at all times. It follows that RVs and PWs would express tolerance when dealing with other volunteers and other paid workers, even when dealing with professional matters. While contextualizing the organization as a volunteer organization occurs for administrative and operational reasons like understanding funding constraints and acceptance, it primarily occurs for participants to emotionally relate to the organization through connection and belief in the mission.

Funding Constraint as Feature of Nonprofits

While the emergent theme "funding constraints" fits under both theme 1 and 2, budget cuts and funding constraints bear weight on nonprofit workers. Perceived and processed in different ways, OVs, PWs, and RVs seem to understand that working with less funds is just "part of the business." The PWs understand that work at MIA includes burnout, low compensation, and high turnover rates and this indicates that there is something emotional about their involvement, a nonmaterial emotional reward. This is generalizable for most nonprofits, as a belief in a mission is the connecting glue of nonprofit organizing.

Understanding of Emotional Connection to Nonprofits

Demonstrating an understanding that NPOs and emotions are somehow connected means that nonprofit workers understand that they are emotionally attached to their own organization. Contextualizing nonprofits alongside the emotion that infiltrates every organizational member has allowed OVs, PWs, and RVs to perceive nonprofits as a productive, meaningful, and effective outlet for emotion.

Theme 3: Constructing Emotion

Through themes 1 and 2, nonprofit workers emotionally experience and relate to the organization. Nonprofit workers communicatively construct emotion of their nonprofit work in two ways. First, they experience emotion relative to the work that they do, including job responsibilities, organizational purpose, organizational change, and those they work with, including other paid workers and other volunteers. This emotion-type also includes the nature of nonprofit work by contextualizing the organization within the nonprofit sector. Second, nonprofit workers experience emotion regarding the organization's clients, or those who benefit from services MIA provides. Together, communicatively constructing emotion in relation to nonprofit work occurs relative to job work and clients. Defining and contextualizing the organization (themes 1 and 2, respectively), inform these emotional constructions.

Results in theme 3 are presented by type of worker and then by emotion, rather than by emotion and how each worker type experiences it. This is done in order to accentuate the different uses and experiences of emotion between OVs, PWs, and RVs and how the communication of emotion ultimately constructs the organization.

Office Volunteers

OVs express their emotion solely in relationship to the clients the organization serves. OVs, while primarily event-based, demonstrate an understanding that each event and every organizational activity ultimately benefits those living with mental illness and their family members. OVs experience the nonprofit by describing their emotions and reactions to working with and supporting clients. They express feelings of helplessness, surprise, and sympathy.

Helplessness

OVs describe feeling helpless while volunteering by taking phone calls for the organization. Helplessness is conceptualized by the OVs as feeling unable to help someone. Part of MIA's work includes running a telephone hotline so clients can call-in for help. The first voice heard when a client calls-in is typically whoever works at the front desk, and sometimes OVs help this way. One volunteer describes a "yucky" feeling when she could not help a client:

> The only time I remember leaving feeling kinda yucky inside was, there's, he calls all the time, but it was the first time I had [answered], he calls and hangs up, and then he calls and says, a lot of help you are, screaming it at you and then hangs up, and

> then he calls back and says you people don't . . . I felt horrible, he was angry at us . . . but then [she] helped me understand who he was and I felt bad because it was somebody in pain and I felt helpless and I didn't know what to do . . . helpless is a yucky feeling.

Surprise

OVs are sometimes surprised by the clients, which closely borders on feeling shocked. For example, "It was really shocking at first, it was really, kind of like, oh, I've never been in this situation before, so it was really surprising, just to see like, how much they struggled" (Brooke). This participant volunteers in several MIA areas and one includes a weekly support group for clients living with mental illness. The surprised emotion relates to a change in personal perspective and OVs experience the organization through surprise.

Sympathy

Feeling sympathetic is closely tied with helplessness, but differs in that sympathy is merely "feeling bad" or sad for clients, but helplessness involves an explicit desire to help the client. OVs express sympathy toward clients, "I felt bad when I couldn't play with [the client] sometimes because I was paying attention to someone else or putting my attention elsewhere. I felt bad, but life goes on" (Brooke).

Paid Workers

PWs experience emotion in two key ways: in relation to the nature of their work (including job responsibilities) and in relation to the clients of the organization. When dealing with the nature of their work, PWs experience six emotions: accomplishment, distraction, overwhelmed, lonely, burned out, and frustration. In relation to serving organizational clients, PWs experience three emotions: helplessness, surprise, and sympathy.

Accomplishment

PWs often describe moments of accomplishment as successful, a "good day," or a "proud moment." I asked participants to describe a good day, and later asked them to tell me about a proud moment. Most PWs described feeling accomplished as an aspect of a good day and as a proud moment. "That felt really successful to me, that was like maybe in a gerbil wheel I do get something accomplished . . . I'm successful if I can catch up on my emails and check my voicemails in one day" (Leah). This example demonstrates that for some PWs, accomplishment and success are often linked together. Another exemplar elaborates on accomplishment, "I feel that the [event] was the start of really great things for MIA and I think that even now, that I feel that's the proudest accomplishment I have" (Penny). All PWs' accomplishment relates to administrative duties and typically is only referenced by organizational leaders.

Distraction

Feeling distracted, or experiencing divided attention, occurs in terms of having multiple obligations in the organization. PWs express feeling distracted when their personal job responsibilities and their supervisory responsibilities are in conflict with one another. For example, Leah says:

> I've got to balance that with supporting my staff . . . and they have questions or need some authorizations or support a lot of the times . . . not complaining about that piece, because I want them to feel comfortable coming to me but then the twenty things on my list just sit there.

London mirrors the sentiment:

> I hated coming in and hearing people say to me, you've been gone, I've been trying to get this information, you're finally back, you know, that was like, I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing, but I always felt badly that I'm not giving you what you need.

PWs divided attention stems from a culture of support and wanting to provide the best support for coworkers, yet still needing to complete their own tasks and duties.

Overwhelmed

Because PWs have job responsibilities that stem from administrative to supervisory, and sometimes to operational duties, they express feeling overwhelmed. PWs mostly feel overwhelmed because they are “stretched thin” and there is not enough time. When asked what emotion she feels most, Leah responded:

> Busy . . . that’s not an emotion. Chaotic, is that an emotion? . . . stretched thin. No, chaotic . . . and disorganized . . . Busy is not a feeling, what would the feeling word be? I feel overwhelmed. There’s a feeling. I feel overwhelmed.

Lonely

PWs describe feeling lonely at times, mostly due to many PWs holding part-time positions and only a few being full-time. Sometimes PWs who spend more time in the office experience loneliness.

> So the days when the office is really quiet . . . there’s just no body here and you’re like, ‘what’s going on!’ But that can be rough because you know . . . I work on the computer and so if I don’t have that kind of interaction, I feel like not as good about the day.

In addition to physical loneliness, PWs in leadership positions tend to reference a mental loneliness, a distance from “everyone else.” “I didn’t understand until I became [this position now], how lonely it can be sometimes. How you’re just different and you’re perceived as being different” (London).

Burned Out

PWs explain feeling burned out as an effect of the work they do. Some PWs express feeling burned out as a result of their amount of work and they feel burned out emotionally.

> I mean, as rundown as I sometimes get by the end of the week and everything, I think I accomplish something great everyday because I'm here and because I'm able to be around this environment and keep striving to make a difference.

Through this exemplar, we can see that PWs describe a love for and from their coworkers that seems to fill up PWs where burnout had emptied them.

Frustration

PWs frustration primarily stems from working with OVs and RVs, but surfaces in many ways. In relation to OVs, PWs express frustration in terms of tasks and follow-through:

> It's always helpful when I start getting frustrated when I'm trying to create something that . . . they're able to do as a volunteer, and feeling that it's more work than it's worth to have them here, I really have to focus and remember how important it is for them to be there.

On the other hand, PWs express a sense of tolerance or acceptance after their frustration:

> Going back to when we had people at the front desk it'd be kind of frustrating when they'd transfer somebody to me and I'd be like, I'm not the right person, and I can't say I blame them, but it was a hardship. And some days I'd be like, 'awe really', and then other days I'd be like, 'it's okay, I understand'.

PWs are also frustrated by communication with RVs, as they do not often hear from RVs. Typically, PWs need information from RVs to aid in administrative job responsibilities and when RVs do not report this information, PWs express frustration. "It's hard for me to be able to balance that and not be too much like, (mock-yelling) 'give me your numbers! Ah!'"(Leah). PWs also suppose that RVs are frustrated with them, as London describes, "I think they get really frustrated with us. And rightly so . . . I think they see a lot of the do's and don'ts we lay out for them." PWs do not express frustration with clients or with each other.

Helplessness

PWs feel helpless only when they take phone calls from clients. Sometimes the clients will be in such a unique situation that MIA cannot help them. For example, Stephanie remembers one experience:

> I remember, I think it was last winter. I had a call from a guy, he was homeless, it was snowing, it was horrible snow day. He was out in a field somewhere, didn't want to go to the shelter . . . I could see the snow and how bad it was, and he was saying, 'I'm wet and I don't have this and I don't have that,' . . . I was eventually able to help him . . . but just to go home and just kinda hurt knowing people are living like that.

Though not an explicit declaration of feeling helpless, Stephanie reflects on a time where she felt "hurt" knowing that clients are sometimes in tough situations. She ultimately was able to help the client, but feels a general sense of helplessness for the conditions of some clients living with mental illness.

Surprise

Similar to OVs, PWs also experience surprise when dealing with clients. One PWs describes the first time she worked one-on-one with a client, “My first [experience] that I can remember was really intense, almost shocking” (Ellen). Dealing with mental illness often means dealing with the unknown and an expression of shock or surprise makes sense when adapting to the range of effects mental illness can have, especially for the PWs who often work only from the main office with clients.

Sympathy

PWs also express feelings of sympathy, or feeling badly for clients:

> A hard day . . . is when I read the news accounts that sadden me, that break my heart (choked up), it’s you know, sad stuff. Those are not bad days, those are hard days . . . imagining where a person’s life can get so dark and so hopeless that they turn to those tragic things (Dawn).

Similar to OVs, expressing sympathy is different from expressing helplessness, in that helplessness includes an attempt to help or support the client. Sympathy merely expresses feeling negative emotions for the client.

Remote Volunteers

Similar to PWs, RVs express emotion in two different ways: either in relation to their tasks or in relation to the clients they work with. RVs tend to feel distracted and overwhelmed when considering their job responsibilities, but seem to be more focused on the positive emotions that come from working with clients. These emotions include helplessness, inspiration, sympathy, and empowerment.

Distraction

When balancing the responsibilities of being a volunteer, RVs express a sense of divided attention between their professional jobs and volunteer responsibilities. For example, "If I were getting paid because I wouldn't have to work this job and I would have this time to do MIA stuff rather than 'getting paid' stuff (laughter)" (Justme). Funding plays a role in this emotion, as if earning money was not a priority, RVs could spend all their time on MIA. They would not experience distraction between various roles in their personal lives.

Overwhelmed

Similar to PWs, RVs are sometimes overwhelmed. Contrary to PWs, however, RVs tend to express feeling overwhelmed only when they began their involvement or during times of transition. For example, Justme describes feeling overwhelmed when she first became involved, “Sometimes it can be a little overwhelming and tire ya [sic] out, but it’s not really a bad day.” Newyork talks about feeling overwhelmed during affiliate-level change “I’m not teaching any . . . classes for a while because being on the affiliate board is totally consuming right now.”

Helplessness

Relative to the clients, RVs also feel helpless at times. RVs frame their helplessness about wanting to create more resources to help clients. “So you just offer them what you can, support classes . . . we don’t have enough to teach the support classes and that’s the first thing they need is a support class” (Irene). The emotional weight also seems to resonate with certain RVs in terms of feeling helpless due to the effects of mental illness. When reflecting on an experience with a client, Olivia describes “not getting through” to the client. She says:

> You know that person is not going to go forward with anything in the crisis, you know the world’s here and there’s all bad. That feels really bad. You know, like there’s anybody to help, you’re worried about what they’re gonna do because you have nobody

to call and say check on them please.

Inspiration

Rather than surprise or shock, like OVs and PWs experience, RVs are inspired by clients. One participant describes the heaviness of having to take medications with various side effects, and in turn feels inspired by the clients, “And here, my students [clients], and peers, are taking that, and then medicine stops working and you watch them struggle to find another medication that will work again. They give me hope, they teach me (choked up)” (Newyork). Connecting to the clients through MIA’s purpose by feeling inspired enables the RVs to develop an emotional bond with the clients, and subsequently with the organization.

Sympathy

RVs also express feeling sympathetic for clients. They feel bad for clients at times, as Newyork describes, “When students drop off in class and don’t come back, you know, we can’t hunt them down and have them come back, and I feel bad. I feel bad.” What differentiates RVs’ sympathy from OVs’ or PWs’ sympathy is that RVs express a feeling of commitment to clients. “We’ve been there. We’ve been on the other side. And because we’ve been there, we’ve made a commitment to ourselves that if we can prevent anybody else's life we will do any and all things to do that" (Midnightsun).

<u>Empowerment</u>

Uniquely, RVs are the only nonprofit workers to describe feeling empowered or able from what they have experienced through MIA. RVs express their empowerment by sharing stories about what they were able or confident to do as a result of their time with MIA. In one instance, an RV describes dealing with a man with mental illness at her personal workplace:

> A gentleman walks in and, he's an older gentleman, his speech was very rapid, very sloverish [sic] and I immediately knew that I was in front of somebody who has a mental illness . . . I just kept talking with him . . . and the fact that I'm involved with MIA gave me the knowledge to be able to talk to the gentleman without being scared.

In another instance, Midnightsun (RV) shares an experience where she needed to step in during an attempted suicide situation:

> I'm housesitting . . . and the son of the parents who I'm housesitting for, I took a loaded weapon from him two weeks ago. And it's because of my involvement with MIA that I was stupid enough to go down to the basement to confront the situation (sigh). You know, I would never have thought of doing it beforehand . . . you never know when the skills that you'll learn are gonna step up and you're gonna have an opportunity to make a difference in somebody's life.

Analysis of Theme 3: Constructing Emotion

Each type of worker expresses emotion in different ways about distinctive parts of the organization. Defining and contextualizing the organization influence how nonprofit workers experience emotion. The following analysis section describes emotional relationships of OVs, PWs, and RVs, as they describe their emotions.

Office Volunteers

OVs use their emotion to experience the nature of the organization. Participants relate emotionally to the clients of the organization. Experiencing helplessness, surprise, and sympathy seems to be an avenue of motivation. Kanale said:

> What makes me proud and motivates me to keep coming back each year is seeing the positive affect the event has upon the participants . . . It's gratifying when you can take a tragedy and turn it into a blessing for others. If we were to save but one life, it would all have been worth it. How much greater is our joy when we can save many.

Notably, OVs only describe emotion in relation to the clients and do not allude to emotions about any administrative obligations.

Paid Workers

For PWs, most emotions relating to the work comes from those in leadership positions. This makes sense within the contextual frame of nonprofit organizations. With funding constraints and budget cuts, we find less people doing more work. London supports this idea when she says:

> What's the incentive? It's not a glamorous cause, we don't have a ton of money to pay you, we'll have you work super hard and do the job of about three people, and we'll pay you the wages of about half a person.

Feeling overwhelmed, distracted, and lonely certainly leaves PWs feeling burned out and an emphasis on accomplishment almost seems to cover up the negativity resulting from burnout. The positive feelings PWs express about their accomplishments seems to "reimburse" the PWs for their multitasking, balancing, and negative moments. In addition, PWs describe emotions that implicitly signify that they perceive themselves hierarchically superior to volunteers. "For the most part, the volunteers and interns we get . . . they've been great for the most part. It's a little chaotic to give especially interns a meaningful experience" (Leah). These expressions indicate that there *is* a hierarchical structure within the organization, and that PWs are above volunteers, responsible for giving them what they need. What is interesting is that PWs do not explicitly describe which department they are in, who their supervisor is, and who is underneath them except in rare instances. Emotionally, PWs conceptualize OVs in possessive terms.

On the other hand, the emotions relating to clients come from PWs who function as liaisons between clients and the organization, shifting the focus from administrative tasks toward operational goals. These PWs seem more relaxed in the organization as they do not express feelings of frustration, burnout, loneliness, or accomplishment. These PWs are not primarily responsible for the administration of the organization, yet are in the same physical space as those who are. It seems that upper-level administrative-type PWs are also "reimbursed" through the environment the lower-level operational-type PWs create.

Remote Volunteers

RVs express emotion in relation to MIA primarily through experiences with clients. Secondarily, RVs describe their emotion about their job responsibilities. Notably, RVs do not express frustration, as PWs had supposed. Rather, RVs seem to feel well supported and encouraged by the main office. The PWs feel that RVs are frustrated with them and so they act in a more supportive and patient manner, in order to not frustrate RVs anymore. The PWs perspective that RVs are frustrated is not a perspective shared with the RVs, but since they perceive RVs are frustrated (when they are not really), the RVs interpret the actions as supportive and encouraging. When RVs express feeling well supported and encouraged from PWs and the state office, it is an artifact of the communicative construction of nonprofit organizing. In addition, RVs are the only type of nonprofit workers who describe feeling empowered as a result of their experience. Furthermore, they are the only worker type who expresses feelings of inspiration by clients of the organization. This type of communicative construction of emotion in relation to the nature of nonprofit work can tangibly save lives.

Analysis of RQ1

Taken in combination with one another, these findings and analyses suggest that each worker type primarily focuses on one part of the organization. Through defining and contextualizing, nonprofit workers experience emotion as part of their nonprofit work. Interestingly, participants also express their own motivation and gain as fundamental to the nonprofit work. Personal motivation and gain provide an instrumental link between understanding the themes and the final conclusions.

Motivation and Gain

Participants emotionally connect to the organization through their motivation and gain. At first, motivation and gain seemed to overlap so much that distinguishing between the two did not seem necessary. After further analysis, nonprofit worker motivation is *why* they engage in nonprofit work and gain is *what* they receive from the work. Two sides of the same coin, motivation and gain inform each other, but are separate.

Office Volunteers

Raising awareness of mental illness through events and community interaction primarily motivates office volunteers. Their gain comes from being educated and learning from the paid workers and events. Shawni reflects on the gain she receives:

> I get to have the opportunity to learn from them because they know so much more than I do. It's like taking a class without having to pay for it (laughter) . . . they teach me, but also their, I don't know what you call it . . . their energy, something is, you can feel it, and it's catchy and it's . . . why I call the place uplifting, because you can come out and feel like you were better for having walked in.

Judy echoes the sentiments:

> It's totally changed my life. The education behind it . . . I just don't look at anything the same . . . it was like I walked out one day and the world was a different color.

Paid Workers

Paid workers are primarily motivated by their coworkers and by the features of their job. The workplace environment also influences motivation, including humor and emotional support. For example, Ellen reflects on how humor motivates her:

> That humor and that lightness, because mental illness can be very serious and sometimes we have clients that . . . are really

> difficult to work with . . . and having that lightness and that light attitude kinda [sic] says 'okay, I can see where you're coming from.'

PWs gain comes from learning about mental illness from their coworkers. Josie elaborates on her own gain and motivation:

> They [other PWs] influence me because I see the struggles that they've dealt with . . . I'm so inspired because I'm like 'man, I think I've dealt with a lot' and then I think about what so-and-so has had to deal with with [sic] their son, or what so-and-so's had to deal with in their own mental illness . . . these people are going and keep going and they can make a difference, and I can too. And you know, like buck up and go to work (laughter)!

<u>Remote Volunteers</u>

Remote volunteers are motivated by helping others, recovery (for themselves or their family members), and by raising awareness in general venues. Their motivation comes from helping themselves through helping others in two ways, either through receiving support by giving support, or by learning about their own mental illness through teaching/facilitating programs about mental illness. For example, Justme learned how to repurpose her anxiety:

> I think for the most part, I deal with a lot of anxiety, but when I'm dealing with MIA stuff its good anxiety, it's um, pleasurable. It's fun, it's exciting. I think that's it, just a happy, excited, kind of, feeling. It's like, okay, what are they going to throw at me next (laughter).

RVs' gain comes from their own change in perspective by learning about mental illness through the organization's programs.

Notably, all types of nonprofit workers describe their motivation by somehow changing others' perspectives of mental illness. Similarly, all descriptions of gain come through learning, which involves a *personal* perspective change. This is in alignment with the organization's mission statement, "To ensure the dignity and improve the lives of those who live with mental illness and their families through support, education, and advocacy." Support, education, and advocacy all involve changing perspectives about mental illness.

While themes 1 and 2 allow us to understand how nonprofit workers experience emotion in NPOs, the three themes together inform each type of workers' main focus on the organization. Combining findings related to motivation and gain provide us further insight into each type of worker's main focus. The type of focus held by each worker type explains how they communicatively construct their emotion concerning nonprofit work. RQ1 findings and analysis indicates that OVs primarily focus on events, PWs emphasize job features and organizational structure, and RVs concentrate on mission-based organizational programs, demonstrated in Figure 4.1. While there is overlap in these areas, the focus of OVs on events describes the "what" of MIA, PWs' emphasis on job features and organizational structure describes the "how" of MIA, and the concentration of RVs on mission-based MIA programs describes the "why" of MIA.

Figure 4.1 The Question-Words Model of MIA

All findings in defining, contextualizing, and constructing emotion themes can also be sorted into nonprofit worker focus: OVs on events, PWs on job features/organizational structure, and RVs on the organizational purpose and programs. Considering NPOs as a whole, this overarching finding can be generalized to other NPOs because volunteers tend to help most with operational functions of the organization while paid workers are organized around administrative functions. OVs and RVs share many similarities, and RVs and PWs share many similarities. OVs and PWs share a few similarities but are functionally different. Importantly, without one of these groups and their defining features, the organization would not exist as complete. Like pieces of a puzzle are organized in several ways—size, shape, color—so are nonprofit workers organized by focus, emotions, and how they conceptualize and define the organization. When put together, they each compose part of a whole, each piece informing the others and reflecting organizational identities and purpose. The organizational whole, in this case, seeks to benefit those living with mental illness and their families. This creates a unique situation where emotion is *how* participants relate to the organization and emotion is also *why* the organization exists.

Without this organization and its subsequent parts (OVs, PWs, and RVs), many people would be at a loss. Many participants describe an extreme gratitude toward MIA, including OVs, PWs, and RVs. "It's totally changed my life . . . I just don't look at anything the same . . . it was like I walked out one day and the world was a different color" (Judy, OV). "I really love it here. And I don't know, I honestly don't know what I'd do if I hadn't found MIA. I would not be in the same good place" (Josie, PW). One RV identifies the life-saving influence MIA can have, "I wish I had found it twenty years ago. If I'd have found it twenty years ago, it may have had a difference in my wife's life (crying). We'll never know." In this organization, participants identify with the cause because the cause identified with them.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF RQ2

Three main themes emerged in response to RQ2, displayed in Table 5.1. Theme 1 answers RQ2 by stating that nonprofit workers define their relationship to the organization. Findings in this theme include a shared experience, defining and identifying as “volunteer,” and organizational structure. Theme 2 responds to RQ2 by describing that nonprofit workers first define *themselves* in relationship to the organization. Findings in theme 2 include how OVs, PWs, and RVs understand their purpose in the organization. Theme 3 elaborates that nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotions in their relationships with other nonprofit workers. Findings in this theme include how each type of nonprofit worker communicatively constructs their emotions regarding relationships with other nonprofit workers.

Theme 1, how nonprofit workers define their relationship to MIA, lays the framework of how nonprofit workers perceive their own relationship to the NPO. This foundation leads to theme 2, how nonprofit workers identify *themselves* within MIA. The findings in

Table 5.1- Research Question 2 Results

Research Question 2: How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers?

Theme 1	**Relating to MIA**
	Shared Experience
	Defining “Volunteer”
	Identifying as Volunteer
	Structure
Theme 2	**Constructing Identities Within MIA**
Theme 3	**Constructing Relationships Within MIA**
	Level 1: Describe
	Level 2: Characterize/Connect
	Level 3: Name

theme 2 allow an understanding of how each type of nonprofit worker understands their own identity and relationship in and to the organization. Relating to MIA and constructing identities within MIA lead to theme 3, how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their relationships with other nonprofit workers. Results in RQ2 suggest that nonprofit workers define their relationship to the organization, orient themselves relevant to the broader organization, and they define, characterize, and name their relationships with other nonprofit workers. It is unclear if these themes exist in an ordered process, but it is certain that nonprofit workers engage in each (relating to MIA, constructing identities, and constructing relationships) to varying degrees.

Each theme presents findings, displayed through the perspectives of each worker type: office volunteers (OVs), paid workers (PWs), and remote volunteers (RVs). Ultimately, themes 1, 2, and 3 build on one another to answer how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers.

Theme 1: Relating to MIA

Nonprofit workers define their relationships to the organization in four general ways: through discussing the connection of a shared experience, by defining what “volunteer” is, by identifying *as* a volunteer, and by describing the organizational structure. In combination, defining volunteer and identifying *as* a volunteer strongly relate to Theme 2 in RQ1, where nonprofit workers contextualize the organization. The difference in these overlapping concepts occurs in *how* the nonprofit workers use their communicative constructions of emotion; in RQ1, they define the organization as a volunteer organization to contextualize the nonprofit and the nature of nonprofit work. Here, nonprofit workers use elements of defining the organization as a volunteer organization in order to explain their relationship to other types of workers within the organization. These framework-building ideas demonstrate a hierarchy, implicitly understood by nonprofit workers within the organization. This is an underlying theme throughout all results, findings, and analyses.

Shared Experience

Because MIA is an organization that deals with issues of mental health, most participants relate their experience of mental health to their relationship with the organization. As explained earlier, an unspoken rule of MIA is that all people involved either suffer from their own mental illness or have a family member who has a mental illness. Caroline explains:

> There are two kinda [sic] rules. You either have to be a consumer or you have to be a family member, and the reason is so you can have that emotional investment and you can have that sympathy because it’s very very easy when . . . you’re not a consumer or you’re not a family member to be a little judgmental.

This common experience is one way nonprofit workers explain their emotional connection and their relationship to the organization.

Office Volunteers

OVs describe their shared experiences in terms of the outcomes of mental illness. Through dealing with their own mental illness or family members with mental illness, OVs explain their shared experience by expressing the good that comes from a diagnosis. For example, Judy explains with optimism how she relates to the organization:

> I think everybody just wants the best outcome so you know, when somebody voices the outcome that everybody resonates with, [the organization] just kinda goes toward that, you know it's just kind of a river that's guided in whatever's . . . the best.

Additionally, Judy describes a passion, shared with other nonprofit workers at the organization, "They are very passionate, you know, if somebody cares about [MIA] you can see that fire in them."

Paid Workers

PWs tend to relate their shared experiences by contextualizing the experience in relationship to their job. For example, Leah stated, "Everybody is very real and down to earth and there because of something more than just doing a job." She continues, "and then the people that you're getting are people who, there's a higher purpose for this." PWs situate their shared experiences of mental illness within elements of the nature of nonprofit work including their job responsibilities. Another PW explains the shared experience, "I really love working here, and everybody here has a common purpose and a common passion and that's just, ah, warm fuzzies, it's awesome" (Josie). Stephanie adds, "Maybe it's because you all have some kind of shared experience with this mental illness thing, you know, if someone's child ends up in the hospital, you know, everyone understands and it's such a supportive environment." This demonstrates that there is an underlying motivator beyond monetary or relational rewards, a shared passion.

Remote Volunteers

RVs understand their relationship to the organization in terms of their shared experiences of mental illness as they can be used to benefit the organization's clients. For instance, Midnightsun explains:

> I believe everybody is like-minded in that regard and trying to focus and help others that are moving through a difficult time in their life . . . and most of those individuals will drop anything . . . to assist those individuals.

There is also an understanding of hierarchy, but that each part of the organization, regardless of structure, is equally involved. As one RV explains when asked to describe the people who work for MIA:

> They are very upbeat and they are just so willing to do anything and they're donating their time and their money a lot of times . . . but they have such a passion also that they want to reach others in the community . . . tell their story how most of them have gone through a few rocky roads themselves with family members, so they lived the first hand basis (Irene).

This closely reflects the fourth finding in this theme, structure. RVs relate their shared experiences of mental illness by understanding that all organizational participants, regardless of status, share the experience of mental illness.

Defining Volunteer

Implicitly, participants describe what it means to be a volunteer for MIA, and each type of worker maintains different inferred definitions. Uniquely, participants never describe or qualify what it means to be an office volunteer, paid worker, or remote volunteer. Additionally, participants were not explicitly asked to define volunteer.

Office Volunteers

OVs do not refer to themselves as “office volunteers” but rather look to other types of workers, like PWs, to describe what volunteer means. For instance, “[They’ve] made my experience all positive. Their support and volunteerism continues to grow as our event grows” (Kanale). Additionally, Shawni states, “First of all, I don’t think they get paid a whole lot (laughter) and so maybe that’s . . . in a way, they’re volunteers, in a way.” This suggests that to OVs, PWs are complex members of the organization who are paid but also have attributes of volunteers. Additionally, OVs describe the “sense” of a volunteer by elaborating that community members can also volunteer:

> I went to present to [an] afternoon class . . . and this man had, he was very quiet, he was very nice, but very introverted. He stood up and started telling his story in front of everyone . . . and you hear the silence come over the room- it’s just those moments, like no body asked him to do that . . . and he was a volunteer in a sense.

Paid Workers

PWs define volunteer by describing the attributes of volunteers. For instance, Dawn states, “It’s working with people who want to do what they’re doing and not compelled to do what they’re doing but have an interest in impacting others and that’s why they are volunteering.” Additionally, Stephanie describes volunteers by saying, “They are really wonderful. Sometimes they’re a little flaky, but that's, you know, they’re volunteers, and again some of them are volunteers with mental illnesses and so that can play a factor sometimes.” Discreetly, PWs suggest that volunteers have fewer obligations to the organization and reveal their sense of tolerance toward volunteers, due to their possible mental illnesses.

Remote Volunteers

RVs recognize and define volunteer through an understanding that there are levels of volunteering in the organization. RVs suggest that these levels include either board service or volunteering as a teacher-facilitator. RVs implicitly refer to this distinction. When I asked, “How do the people that you see when you volunteer influence you,” I was met with various clarifying responses. Justme asked, “You mean other people that volunteer how I see them? Or how they influence me, or just people I work, do the groups with?” Midnightsun also responded, “You mean the consumers?” Though they are verbally clarifying what type of answer I am looking for, RV participants also indicate their communicative construction of their relationship to the organization by drawing distinctions between board volunteers, affiliate volunteers, and consumers.

Identifying as Volunteer

Identifying as a volunteer within MIA is a third way to understand how nonprofit workers perceive their own relationships to the organization. Each type of nonprofit worker identifies their own ways of being a volunteer, with flexible definitions, despite official titles or contractual responsibilities.

Office Volunteers

OVs tend to identify as event-based volunteers, explaining their volunteerism relevant to their respective events. For instance, one OV explains her relationship to the annual bike ride, “I am the event director for the [Classic Bike Tour], a cycling event I started . . . in honor of . . . a former friend and avid cyclist who was taken by suicide.” Another OV states her volunteerism relevant to her event, “I participated in [Community Connection], which was [once a week], and I got to interact with a lot of people that go to [Community

Connection] and they usually have mental illnesses." OVs communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers by first identifying their relationship to the organization, primarily as event-based volunteers.

Paid Workers

PWs identify as volunteers by explaining MIA obligations that exist outside of the requirements of their position. For example, Stephanie explains her title and job responsibilities, but also explains other volunteer-type tasks:

> . . . And those are the primary job responsibilities. There are other things I do that are specific to just me and my position . . . I help to facilitate the weekly [community connection] for individuals with mental illness, every Monday evening I do a presentation for family members and patients at the [College] neuropsychiatric institute . . . I sit on a couple of committees.

PWs explain their volunteerism by discussing tasks that exist outside of their formal job responsibilities, by serving as board members of other related organizations, or by teaching-facilitating MIA programs or classes. Josie reflects on her experience volunteering as a teacher-facilitator:

> I started teaching the course, teaching the students, they're typically thirteen to eighteen, and I really like that, I like being around . . . kids that age, they're very frank and I really appreciate that . . . it really helped me heal, and you know, be able to better deal with the things that I went through.

Remote Volunteers

RVs situate themselves as organizational volunteers by managing or coordinating other volunteers. For example, one RV reflects on her experience navigating how to motivate volunteers:

> There's a broad mix of non-consumers and consumers and so you have to figure out how to deal with both. With not just both those types of situations, but every individual has things that motivate them, and demotivate them, so you have to understand what motivates people . . . and treat them in such a manner that you get the most out of them. The flip side of that is that you can't walk in with a two by four and smack everybody alongside the head to motivate them . . . and so as a volunteer, as a manager, as a supervisor to people, you have to figure out what makes them tick to get the most out of them (Midnightsun).

Almost all RVs refer to volunteers as though they are another group, which suggests that RVs do not immediately identify as a volunteer. For instance, Olivia explains:

> We're dividing all that up now, taking all the jobs I have and . . . moving them off to the volunteers, so we have an organization that's bigger, probably between thirteen and fifteen regular people who can be called on as volunteers.

Additionally, Caroline says:

> They're very supportive, you know, like my volunteers at the affiliate, they're very very supportive . . . they know that I'm a full time mom, teacher . . . and they're always asking me, just let us know how we can help.

Subtly, RVs imply that there is another sector of volunteers at their affiliates.

Structure

Understanding organizational structure provides clarity for nonprofit workers to understand their purpose and relationship to the organization. OVs identify organizational structure by framing themselves against PWs, PWs discuss structure by situating themselves within the state-wide organization, and RVs describe organizational structure by identifying macro- and microlevels of the organization.

Office Volunteers

OVs, while they mostly identify as event-based, also imply that they are on the same "level" as other OVs. Brooke reflects on her experience at the annual MIA Run/Walk fundraiser:

> It was fun just to work with volunteers because they were in my position, so like they were kind of being led by other people, [and] being led by me, which was weird for a couple of them, and I was like, whoa this is weird.

OVs also have an understanding that PWs are somehow "higher up" in the organizational hierarchy than they are. For example, Brooke reflects, "The paid workers, you can kinda tell, because they're the ones like running the place . . . they're more aware of what's going on . . . just by like everything they have to do, they're so busy." In addition to understanding OVs and PWs positions within the organizational structure, one OV broadens the perspective by briefly referring to the Board of Directors at the main office and to the RVs:

> I think the board from my interaction with them has become more of a grounding force, and I've become more used to them and know who they are and the affiliates, being able to meet some of the affiliates . . . The more I expand into those other areas . . . those types of things have changed my perspective because I can see the whole picture instead of just one of it [sic] (Judy).

Paid Workers

PWs describe the organizational structure in two ways. First, they distinguish between volunteer types. They differentiate between volunteer types in subtle ways, usually when they asked for clarification in response to an interview question. PWs separate office volunteers, interns, community service volunteers, and teacher-facilitator volunteers. For instance, Leah clarifies:

> Honestly, when I think of volunteers I think of the volunteers that come into the state office . . . I could think of like, outside of, like our affiliates, I think of them as the affiliates . . . and the teachers and facilitators.

Here, one PW separates OVs from RVs. Another PW, Ellen, elaborates: "A lot of times, they're doing community service and so I like to make them feel like they're at home, and they're not being judged you know for whatever they did for them to have to do volunteer work." This demonstrates that PWs distinguish between RVs and types of OVs, and they also categorize interns as OVs:

> So I have . . . the volunteers who come into the office and

> volunteer, because a lot of them need community service hours, and then I also am in charge of the interns . . . students have come and done internships with us and I deal with them, and then our affiliates who are all volunteers (Penny).

Secondly, PWs refer to the structure at the MIA main office. PWs refer to other PWs as their coworkers, more often calling them the "state office." For instance, "So maybe the people at the state office . . . I guess I see those people as being my coworkers" (Leah). They also acknowledge the organizational structure within the main office during times of promotion. Leah reflects on a time of transition:

> It was interesting to start as a peer . . . and then get promoted . . . so I started as [her] peer, not even in the same department, and . . . then, to get promoted and to be her supervisor was a strange adjustment for me.

Finally, PWs communicatively construct the organizational structure by contrasting administrative and operational roles of different types of PWs. For instance, Dawn describes her role; "My role here would be different from a mentor's role, where you are dealing with people's emotions . . . so I'm a little more removed from that emotional kind of stuff." Additionally, London relates:

> You don't get to see the hands-on benefits of some of the other positions where you know, if you're a mentor, you have all of the difficulties of listening to tragic stories and the amazing satisfaction of saying 'I helped this individual.' . . . Kind of at my level, you see less of that . . . I really kind of crave that information back of what's going on at the local level . . . it's why I do what I do is so that everybody else can do what they do.

PWs demonstrate an understanding that they primarily hold administrative positions while other types of PWs are more operational in nature.

Remote Volunteers

RVs provide further insight into understanding communicative constructions of the organizational structure. RVs are the only group of participants to identify the national organization as the overarching framework of MIA. For example, Olivia explains, “I like being part of a national organization and I think they’re doing their very best right now to affiliate there and bring our organization back to our levels.” Justme elaborates, “I’m thinking that they experience MIA like maybe they’re sitting in their office . . . and the national office calls and says ‘hey, we got another regulation and you can’t do this anymore.’” RVs also have an understanding that MIA is one state office in the national organization:

> I stand in awe that the [MIA main office] does what it does, because I, our affiliate has investigated other states . . . I walked into the Omaha [MIA] state office . . . they don’t have funding to even offer any classes.

Olivia also explains:

> And from the national level, I can see the organization in a bigger picture, I can appreciate more of what [we’re] trying to do. I’ve seen California . . . I can see the Walk in Connecticut . . . Los Angeles raising two million.

In addition to contextualizing MIA in its broader organizational frame, RVs acknowledge other affiliate locations. Midnightsun reflects on her experience in another state, "The organization down here . . . is huge comparatively speaking. There's two organizations [affiliates] in Alaska . . . there's what, fifteen county affiliates here . . . as well as a state organization."

Analysis of Theme 1: Relating to MIA

Shared Experience

All types of nonprofit workers relate their personal experience of mental illness to their relationship with the organization. OVs explain their experience, but do so without describing other nonprofit workers' shared experiences. PWs and RVs both identify other components of the organization (other PWs and RVs) while describing their emotional relationship to MIA. Interestingly, PWs use their shared experience to better understand their job responsibilities, and RVs describe using their experiences of mental illness for the benefit of organizational clients. This finding fits with findings in RQ1, that OVs tend to relate to the events (or the *what*), that PWs relate to the job features and organizational structure (or the *how*), and that RVs tend to relate to the mission-based programs and clients (or the *why*).

Defining Volunteer

Defining volunteer begins to draw out how each type of participant perceives their relationship to the organization. OVs tend to understand what a volunteer is by describing that anyone can be a volunteer. This involves less focus on formal titles and more focus on the organizational mission. If the purpose of the organization is to spread awareness of mental illness through events, as noted in RQ1, it fits that OVs construct the definition of volunteer accordingly. PWs tend to outline volunteer in terms of contractual obligations, which contrasts with the views of RVs, who imply that volunteer happens in several ways, regardless of formal obligations. When PWs define volunteers by a lower contractual obligation, support is found for current literature. This finding suggests that PWs also perceive a lower contractual obligation from volunteers and so communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationship to the organization and to volunteers. The ways nonprofit workers define volunteer further support the finding that participants contextualize the MIA as a volunteer organization made up of component parts. Closely related, participants identify themselves as volunteers, however varied that identification is for each type of nonprofit worker.

Identifying as Volunteer

While most participants contextualize the organization within the nonprofit sector as a volunteer organization, many OVs, PWs, and RVs also explain their relationship to the organization by defining volunteer and by identifying as a volunteer. These are two ways of relating to the organization and provide insight into how nonprofit workers perceives themselves in relationship to the organization. RVs use their nonidentification as a volunteer to distinguish themselves apart from other volunteers. Most RVs participants serve the organization in several capacities: they are board members of local affiliates, they teach and facilitate MIA's programs and classes, they coordinate other teacher and facilitators, and they communicate with PWs at the main office. These findings and analyses directly relate to how RVs perceive themselves, which I discuss further on.

Structure

Combined with how participants define volunteer and identifying as a nonvolunteer, RVs indicate that summing "remote volunteers" into one group is too simple. To PWs and RVs, there are several types of volunteers in MIA that all serve different purposes, each with their own motivations and gains. While one person may be a volunteer in several capacities, participants seem to identify more closely with one aspect of their organizational responsibilities. This fits with Tracy and Trethewey's (2005) notion of the crystallized self, where one aspect of a person's identity is the center at particular times. OVs primarily identify with the event with which they help. PWs tend to put forward their job title as their identity. RVs seem to prioritize their relationship with the board of directors at their respective affiliate locations and then hold fast to their identities as teacher-facilitator volunteers. This clues us in to understanding the organizational structure, that perhaps there are more types of nonprofit workers than the three I have originally suggested. Notably, the ambiguous "other" group that RVs identify, mostly consisting of nonboard member teacher-facilitator volunteers, are unheard from in this research. They are arguably also the group who spends the most time putting the organizational mission into action. Understanding that there is an unspoken-for part of the organizational structure enriches our understanding of MIA.

Theme 2: Constructing Identities Within MIA

After explaining their relationship to the organization and identifying how they are connected to the organization, OVs, PWs, and RVs clarify their own identities and purposes within the organization. While theme 1 describes that participants are relating *to* the organization, theme 2 moves beyond the findings in theme 1 to understand how participants position themselves *within* the organization.

Findings in this theme are presented by nonprofit worker type rather than by concept, because worker types identify themselves in different ways. OVs and RVs within the organization identify simplistically compared to PWs, who identify themselves as multifaceted and complex parts of the organization.

Office Volunteers

OVs build on identifying their relationship to the organization in terms of organizational structure, defining, and identifying as volunteer, as found in theme 1. OVs tend to identify themselves within the organization the same ways they identify their relationship to the organization: as event-based, on the same "level" as other OVs, and separate from PWs. For OVs, identifying themselves in these three ways allows us to see that their relationships to the organization and their perceived identities within the organization are strongly related.

Paid Workers

PWs identify themselves within the organization in three distinct ways: by defining what they do, who they are, and what they are like. Identifying what PWs do relates to their formal and informal job responsibilities, with a focus on the informal roles. Explaining who they are describes their own perceptions of themselves, and elaborating on who they are indicates the qualities PWs perceive they have. Each of these means of identification within the organization build on findings from theme 1 and funnel into theme 3, and ultimately provide a link to understanding how PWs communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers.

First, PWs identify themselves by what they do within the organization. These identifications relate primarily to the informal requirements of their jobs. For example, Ellen explains, "I feel like I've turned negative negative things into a positive or beautiful thing, it's not just one thing or another, it's a mixture of all the different paradigms of mental health." Another PW describes what she does in the organization in terms of maintaining the environment, "I felt like I've kinda had to be like, the cheerleader and rally everybody together and like make sure everybody feels good about what they're doing." Additionally, PWs identify themselves within the organization by explaining how humor factors in to the emotional work they often come across:

> I would definitely say yeah, for me, [humor] is a way to feel more okay about being inside a gerbil wheel, or at least to bring some lightness to that. On some days, I'm not sure what I've accomplished for that day . . . but I know . . . I've built some good relationships there.

Stephanie continues:

> Laughter is the best medicine and I think either we can laugh about it or cry about it, and so, it happens . . . anyone who works in stressful situations, I think it's common to have, I don't want to say a ghoulish sense of humor, but . . . sometimes you're lighthearted whereas other people might not necessarily see the humor in the situation.

Ellen also elaborates:

> That humor and that lightness, because mental illness can be very serious and sometimes we even have clients that . . . are really difficult to work with. You know, and having that lightness and that light attitude kinda. . . leaves it on a positive note.

PWs use their roles and humor to explain what they do within the organization.

Secondly, PWs describe how they perceive themselves by describing who they are. On one hand, PWs identify themselves as a source of support for other PWs; like Leah suggests, "I've got to balance that with supporting my two staff, who, one of which only sees me once a week and needs my support, and the other one gets me two and a half days." On the other hand, PWs express who they are by how others see them. Ellen explicitly explains the importance of others' perspectives on her own perspective, "It's a huge thing because we identify ourselves by how other people see us." She continues:

> I guess maybe I shouldn't put my total focus on what other people think all the time, but that's kinda [sic] when I know that I've had a good day is when people tell me that I made their day and I've made a difference in their lives.

Ellen identifies that PWs often see themselves through the lens of how others see them. In combination, PWs recognize that who they are comes from their supportive roles and through how others see them.

Finally, PWs identify themselves within the organization by explaining what they are like. PWs characterize themselves as disorganized or chaotic, as out-of-touch with RVs, and as complimentary toward other PWs. For example, one PW describes herself and other PWs as feeling disorganized or chaotic, "It's utter chaos. There's not a lot of communication, that it's disorganized, that we're always trying to scramble to find something to do." Other PWs also explain that they feel out of touch with RVs:

> Oh I think they get really frustrated with us. And rightly so . . . I think they see a lot of the do's and don'ts that we lay out for them. [They see us] as regulators . . . rather than partners and collaborators in a common effort (London).

Penny elaborates, "I'm sure that they get frustrated a lot because here at the state office, we ask a lot of them, not only their commitment and their hours and what they're like, um, teaching a class or a support group."

One PW also described a complimentary feeling from another PW:

> It's really nice to have [her] because she . . . compliments each one of us. You know, there was one day, it was a while ago . . . but she went around the room and told each one of us what the

> wonderful thing she sees in each one of us and all of us had something completely different (Ellen).

Qualifying themselves allows us to see how PWs understand their identity within the organization, primarily as disorganized, out-of-touch, and complimented by other PWs.

Remote Volunteers

RVs identify themselves within the organization by referring to the affiliate. Specifically, RVs explain their purpose in the organization by using the word "affiliate" as a job title qualifier. For instance, "I am the [county] MIA affiliate president" (Caroline). "I'm with the [county] affiliate . . . presently I'm chairman of the board of directors (Olivia). "Then I got invited to become a board member on the . . . affiliate" (Newyork). These instances demonstrate that RVs define themselves primarily by their association to the affiliate. Additionally, affiliate concurrently means a group of people *and* a location. PWs use the word affiliate when describing a location, but OVs use the word affiliate to identify a group of people. For example, "Being able to meet some of the affiliates, from working on the [Run/Walk] . . . those things have changed my perspective" (Judy). Conversely, RVs acknowledge affiliate as a people group, "When I'm with the MIA people, I really don't have a bad day. Because we lift each other up. You know, it doesn't matter what mood we started in, when we're done, we're all in a good mood." However, RVs primarily refer to the affiliate as a location and therefore define themselves within MIA as an extension of the central office location. Within the affiliate, RVs also perceive themselves as a support to other RVs and also to their family members. For instance, Caroline describes her organizational involvement in order to emotionally support her family:

> To support my husband, that's my main goal . . . and I think that him participating in MIA makes him feel a lot more comfortable when I'm there, don't tell him that though. He's supposed to be the strong one.

This demonstrates how RVs tend to hold unique roles in the organization, with responsibilities stemming from administrative to operational to the personal and emotional purposes of the organization.

Analysis of Theme 2: Constructing Identities Within MIA

Taken together, how OVs, PWs, and RVs identify themselves within the organization provides an elaboration on how they identify their relationship to the organization. OVs tend to perceive their relationship and their identity in similar ways, while PWs tend to identify themselves within the organization in one of three ways. PWs identify themselves by explaining what they do, who they are, and what they are like. This demonstrates that PWs perceive themselves as complex and diverse in terms of their roles in the organization.

Compared to OVs and RVs, who see themselves rather basically, PWs seem to understand their purpose within the organization as broad and multifaceted. OVs only relate themselves to the events they help with and RVs mostly situate themselves in relationship to their personal lives and their affiliate. Ironically, RVs actually hold the most titles but perceive themselves rather simply; PWs only hold one or two titles by contractual obligation, but perceive themselves far more complexly than RVs.

Theme 3: Constructing Relationships

When identifying the communicative construction of emotion of nonprofit workers' relationships with other nonprofit workers, it is necessary to first understand how each group recognizes the other groups. After defining their relationship *to* the organization and their identity *within* the organization, participants discuss their relationships with other nonprofit workers.

Within this section, findings are displayed primarily in terms of worker type, including OVs, PWs, then RVs. Within each subsection, I briefly review how each participant group perceives themselves, through their relating to MIA and constructing identities within MIA. Then, I explain their relationships to other nonprofit workers, each beginning with their relationship to others in the same group.

Generally, nonprofit workers identify their relationships with other nonprofit workers in progressive steps, beginning first with *describing* the others, then qualifying their *connection* to the others (or *characterizing* the relationship), and finally by *naming* the relationship in terms of friendship, love, or family. Some participants barely enter the *describing* phase of identifying their relationships, whereas other participants engage in all three phases.

Office Volunteers

OVs describe their relationship to the organization and their identity within the organization primarily as event-based, structurally similar to other event-based OVs, and identify in terms of support to PWs. Most relationships of OVs to other nonprofit workers exist within the frame of MIA events, likely due to the fact that three out of four OVs identify as event-based.

Relationship to Other Office Volunteers

OVs rarely describe their relationships to other OVs, and in the few instances where this occurs, it happens while explaining an event. For example, when Brooke reflects on her involvement at the Run/Walk event, she says:

> It was fun just to work with volunteers because they were in my position . . . I was talking to this one girl, I was with her for

> most of the time at the MIA [Run/Walk] and she had her own mental illness too . . . but I related to her in that way.

Another OV states she has not participated in organizational events, and subsequently does not identify relationships with any OVs. Here, OVs barely enter the *describing* phase of their relationships with other OVs.

Relationship to Paid Workers

OVs, while explaining their relationships with other nonprofit workers, mostly discuss their relationships with PWs. Here, OVs *describe* PWs and *characterize* their relationship, reaching well into the first two stages of identifying the relationship. OVs describe PWs in many ways, as compassionate, welcoming, nice, selfless, strong, and supportive. For example, "They're very outgoing, and very nice. I was surprised by how welcoming they were to new interns or volunteers, they were just really so nice and you could tell they were doing something they love" (Brooke). In addition, Kanale describes PWs, "[They] influence me by their enthusiasm and dedication to helping others. Many of them are familiar with mental illness . . . because they have experienced it firsthand." While OVs relate to PWs through adjectives, they also discuss their connection to PWs by describing the environment of the PWs. For instance, Shawni explains, "I feel good just because the environment and the atmosphere in the building itself, and the room itself is positive and uplifting." Additionally, OVs characterize their relationships to PWs through an open and accepting atmosphere. Judy sums up the PWs environment and characterizes her relationships to PWs when she reflects, "You can't help but be absorbed into their environment a little bit and hear what their days are like." OVs describe and characterize their relationships with PWs primarily through the environment that PWs create.

Relationship to Remote Volunteers

OVs rarely refer to RVs. The only instance this relationship is identified is when Judy, an event-based OV, identifies the affiliate as a group of people that compromise part of the structure of MIA. Judy is arguably the only OV who worked closely with PWs continuously, not based on one certain event, but throughout the year with all events. Similar to how OVs explain their relationships to other OVs, they barely enter the *describing* stage.

Paid Workers

PWs explain their relationship to the organization through their shared experiences, defining and identifying as a volunteer, and by understanding the structure of the organization (theme 1). PWs also identify who they are *within* the organization (theme 2). They do so by situating themselves as an intricate part of the organization by explaining who they are, what they do, and what they are like. These perceptions of themselves color their relationships with other PWs, OVs, and RVs.

Relationship to Other Paid Workers

PWs frame many of their gains and motivations in terms of their relationships to other PWs. For example, when asked what keeps her coming back to MIA, Leah responded, "the people." I responded by asking "What about them?" and she continued, "The people at the office and all of our volunteers and teachers . . . they're just good people, that are honest and wanna [sic] do good work and a good job. The people." PWs describe, characterize, and name their relationships with other PWs, moving through all three phases of identifying their relationships.

First, PWs detail their relationships to other PWs with adjectives, similar to how OVs refer to PWs. Some describing words PWs use to talk about other PWs include nonjudgmental, friendly, loving, sacrificial, honest, spirited, and selfless. For example, "[They're] extremely hardworking, really dedicated, passionate, amazing. I respect [them] tremendously" (London). Dawn adds, "I would say very very public, spirited, very giving, very generous, very open, very selfless . . . very loving and concerned." Ellen continues, "Just loving and friendly, complimentary, and nice, and open and nonjudgmental. And just accepting . . . and that's what I love about this job." All 7 PWs interviewed used descriptive words similar to these to begin to define their relationships with other PWs.

Secondly, PWs characterize their relationships with other PWs in terms of how they feel as a result of other PWs. Many PWs do this by describing an environment that fosters support, including feeling understood, accepted, and comfortable. For instance, "I feel comfortable sharing, you know if I have a bad day, it's okay to share and I know that everybody is going to be supportive" (Josie). Additionally, Penny says, "When I'm having a bad day, I feel comfortable talking to anybody here about what I'm going through, and that really helps me . . . not only to get through the day but also to keep working." Additionally, PWs feel encouraged and joyful because of their relationships with other PWs. "[I feel] joy, because whenever it's working with the other people here and . . . we always have something to laugh about" (Josie). "Everyone understands and it's such a supportive environment. I look forward to coming to work" (Stephanie). PWs characterize their relationships with other PWs by describing how they feel.

Thirdly, PWs name their relationships with other PWs. *Naming* the relationship includes verbally saying their relationship with another PW. For instance, Stephanie explains her friendship:

> I've established some friendships that go beyond just their term . . . I'm thinking specifically of the interns we get . . . we get quite a few, [she] was one and now she's working here, and even if she goes somewhere else . . . she and I will always be friends.

Some PWs name their relationships with other PWs by moving beyond "friendship" into "family." For example, Ellen explains, "And I think . . . this is a place where I can come, and it's like a family . . . because we all understand each other, we all understand that we've been touched by mental illness." Another PW continues:

> Well, it's a family. We're a family, it's a MIA family I think because . . . everybody loves, I think most everybody really enjoys being here and . . . the work that we do . . . we're a lot more open I think than any other place because mental health is a lot about emotions and so we're able to be more open about our emotions because we know that people will understand . . . and that brings us closer together, too, as a unit.

Most PWs name the type of relationship with other PWs in terms of friendship and family, and some even describe "love" toward their coworkers. Penny states, "We've got a really good group of people here in the office and I love every single one of them." Another PW elaborates:

> It's a little disorganized, you don't know what's going on half the time, everybody seems to be running around like a chicken with their head cut off . . . and it might frustrate you at times, but you can't help but love the people.

Friendship, family, and love are indicators that PWs feel a stronger connection to other PWs than they do to other nonprofit workers within the organization.

Relationship to Office Volunteers

PWs relate to OVs by first *describing* them. Most PWs describe OVs as hardworking or dedicated. For example, Josie describes event-volunteers, “We have some volunteers that like, totally bust their butts and are like really gung-ho and they will come in like, the worst snow storms to make sure that they’re there at whatever event it is.” PWs do not explicitly identify a relationship with any specific event-based volunteers, only with interns.

Secondly, PWs *characterize* their relationships with OVs, which typically only happens from PWs to intern. PWs characterize their relationships with interns through a sense of hierarchy above them. For example, one PW describes a sense of ownership over interns, “my favorite was . . . having [her] as my intern.” Using the phrase “my intern” suggests a status over the intern. While PWs do not identify their relationships with event-based volunteers, they describe and characterize their relationships to interns as one type of OV.

Relationship to Remote Volunteers

PWs describe their relationships to RVs by *defining* the RVs and *characterizing* their relationships to RVs. Here, PWs only use the first two levels of explaining their relationship, and do not go so far as to *name* the relationship. An understanding that RVs are most likely involved in the organization because it is one way they may respond to mental illness seems to undergird the descriptions and characterizations. For example, Penny postulates:

> For a lot of them, mental illness is their life, whether it's themselves or their child or spouse, or sister, brother, parent . . . there's not a cure for it so they're living with it every day . . . I think a lot of them keep coming back because of that, because it's so important to them.

PWs describe RVs as passionate, indicating one aspect of their relationship. For instance, "And then to describe the volunteers and the teachers and facilitators, they're really, they are also so passionate about what they do." While describing RVs as passionate, PWs also characterize their relationship to RVs, or elaborate on the connection by taking the RVs perspective. Some PWs postulate that RVs experience frustration with PWs. For example, Leah states:

> I think that they, there's a sense of us and them [sic], when you've got the state office and the teachers and facilitators. I think they've been disconnected from the state office for so long so there is this sense of us and them [sic] . . . and it's difficult to bridge that gap to try to form those relationships and get them more connected and us more connected with them.

Penny adds:

> I’m sure that they get frustrated a lot . . . because here at the state office, we ask a lot of them, not only their commitment and their hours and what they’re like . . . teaching a class, or a support group, or running the programs in their areas without a lot of oversight and supervision or help from us here because we have a lot of rural communities . . . and so um, they see us as . . . the problem.

Remote Volunteers

RVs primarily perceive themselves relative to their individual affiliates. RVs identify as a group of people *and* as a location, and so communicatively construct their relationships with other nonprofit workers. While RVs see themselves as a source of support to other RVs and to their families, these personal features create a lens through which RVs understand their relationships with other nonprofit workers. RVs are the only group to explain their relationships with an undefined group of volunteers, most likely the nonboard-member teacher-facilitator affiliate volunteers.

Relationship to Other Remote Volunteers

RVs identify their relationships with other RVs by *describing* and *characterizing* their relationships to other RVs. They do not move into the third step of *naming* the relationship with other RVs. They describe other RVs by referring to the affiliate environment, as a separate environment from the PWs at the main office. RVs describe their own affiliate environments as supportive, a source of inspiration, a means to inspire others, and as friendly. For example, Justme describes her affiliate, “Everybody’s fun to be with, so that kind of lifts up your spirit all the time.” Midnightsun describes inspiring clients who attend MIA programs, “Let’s build their self esteem, let’s validate them . . . they’ve already been torn down enough.”

Additionally, RVs describe other RVs as hardworking, as one RV reflects: “She is one of the hardest workers in outreach under me, and . . . she just gives me hope.” Notably, RVs describe their fellow affiliate volunteers and other RVs as friendly, but do not describe a specific friendship, which would fall into the third *naming* phase of identifying the relationship. For instance, Justme remembers her first MIA meeting, “It was a friendly environment, like I said . . . it’s a friendly atmosphere, it’s very friendly and comfortable, you don’t feel really out of place.”

Moving beyond their descriptions, however, RVs characterize their relationships with other RVs by reflecting on the ways they have learned from other RVs or by sharing their conflict experiences with other RVs. For example, Justme reflects on how she has learned from a co-teacher:

> I always pick up on something new, you know . . . the other gal that teaches the . . . training with me . . . I’ve picked up on a couple of things that she’s done and she’s picked up on what I’ve done, so we’ve just kinda swapped ideas and just kinda helped

each other.

RVs also characterize their connection to other RVs by describing moments of conflict, usually situations in which there are teaching style conflicts:

> Just teaching styles . . . when you first start teaching a class . . . the classes are fairly regimented as to what's said, how it's done and the time period for how it's done. And when you give people an opportunity to talk and tell their stories . . . we've got three minutes. And the person goes four, five, six minutes, and then your partner cuts them off . . . basically what I've done . . . is said, yeah we've got two and a half hours . . . but let's give them a time where we validate them . . . if I take it from that approach I think it's worked well with the other volunteers (Midnightsun).

The elaborations of learning from other RVs or by experiencing conflict with RVs clues us in to understand that RVs relationships are often closely knit, personal, and they often have to work together in arguably tricky situations. Newyork reflects on a unique experience with a coteacher:

> She warned me before she started class that she had PMS. When I teach, I don't dial it down . . . I'm energetic . . . and this co-teacher is more quiet, maybe I trampled over her a couple of times, not meaning to, but during class time, while I was teaching my part, she grabbed my books out of my hands in front of all the students, and she said, 'you're not teaching another moment.' And then I called for a break for the class to leave . . . she said 'you will never work on the affiliate anymore . . .' Then she started talking about things that I had said in class about my mother . . . and she says, 'you're just like your mother.'

Relationship to Office Volunteers

RVs do not refer to OVs in any sense. RVs do, however, refer to another group of volunteers, but not those who primarily work at the main office. I discuss this further in analysis.

Relationship to Paid Workers

RVs explain their relationship to PWs by describing and characterizing their relationships. RVs overwhelmingly describe the PWs as a source of support. For instance, Caroline describes the support her affiliate experiences:

> [They're] extremely supportive . . . the fact that every time we have a question or concern, they always answer right away . . . they always make sure that we have what we need . . . they're happy when our numbers increase, you know 'congratulations, you guys are doing great,' just the little pat on the back.

RVs also describe the PWs as support by elaborating that they are sincere, selfless, passionate, and dedicated. RVs also move to phase two, characterizing the relationship by explaining that they feel accepted by PWs. For example, Justme says, "They accept you for who you are, not for what clothes you're wearing, what church you go to, how much you make or what car you drive, it doesn't matter, we're all human beings and I like that acceptance." Sometimes, RVs call a PW by name (e.g., "Ashley") but do not characterize the relationship by saying something like "Ashley is my friend." The only instance where an RV alludes to a friendship-type relationship is when she describes an e-mail relationship with a past PW.

Relationship to Other Types of Volunteers

Uniquely, RVs do not refer to a relationship with OVs, but identify a relationship with other types of volunteers. The first indicator that there is another perceivable group of volunteers to the RVs was through the pronouns used when describing volunteers. For example, Irene says, "Well the hardest thing is some of them not following through (laughter) with their commitment." Caroline adds, "Especially with my facilitators who are consumers, the fact that they got out of bed and they went to that meeting that day, that's a lot sometimes for them." Midnightsun also indicates that there is another group of volunteers when she says:

> [I'm] extremely grateful for them. They've been through a lot of pain in working where they're at and for them to be willing to walk back in to the frackus [sic] so to speak . . . they're willing to share the road that they walked before with others.

Furthermore, Olivia describes the follow-through of volunteers:

> I find in my volunteer work that I trust people to see if they can do this and if they don't do it, then . . . you gotta get back in there and sweep up behind them and bring it back.

Combined, through referring to volunteers as "they," "them," and "my," it is clear that RVs do not primarily identify as volunteers, and also there is another group of volunteers to which they refer. This ultimately indicates that one of their job responsibilities in their RV position is volunteer coordinating. Different RVs reference different components of volunteer coordinating including recruiting, motivating, retention, and exit. They demonstrate that their relationship to affiliate volunteers includes affiliate teachers and facilitators, but that the relationship is more professional and less personal.

Analysis of Theme 3: Constructing Relationships

Nonprofit workers use their relationships *to* the organization (theme 1) and their constructed identities *within* the organization (theme 2) to inform how they relate to other nonprofit workers (theme 3). In combination, defining, identifying, and explaining their relationships leads to an understanding of how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning other nonprofit workers. Three topics of analysis are made apparent in RQ2.

First, not all nonprofit workers use emotion when communicatively constructing the emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers; they stop at *defining* or *characterizing.* Largely, only PWs refer to others in terms of love, family, or friendships, which explicitly use emotion to identify the relationship. It is important to situate the communicative construction of emotion in terms of phases or steps to understand that not all nonprofit workers relate to other nonprofit workers with explicit emotion. While they may fully understand their own roles and organizational identities, many nonprofit workers shy away from characterizing or naming their relationships. In this vein, defining, characterizing, and naming relationships indicates how they emotionally relate to others. Whether participants only define the relationship or move all the way to naming the relationship demonstrates how nonprofit workers use their emotion to understand their relationships. This does not indicate that they are "not full" organizational members; rather they are critical to the success of the organization. They simply exemplify other ways nonprofit workers perceive and relate to one another. Defining or characterizing other nonprofit workers may be the extent of one's realization of emotion concerning relationships with other nonprofit workers, whereas others, like PWs, advance into naming their relationships.

Second, PWs characterize their relationships with other PWs specifically in terms of the environment. They feel open, accepted, supported, and a common purpose with other PWs. Relating to findings in RQ1, it makes sense that when OVs and PWs describe the environment by saying there is a change in people, that they would also identify a lack of change in environment:

> There's been people changes, but not really a change in environments. I think when you have nonprofit and you have an

> organization who’s whole purpose is to help people, the environment is usually one of gratitude and wanting to help, so you know, it’s uplifting . . . it hasn’t really changed even though people have changed (Shawni).

OVs and PWs identify that the organizational environment remains the same even if the people do not and that the underlying connection, structure, and organizational volunteerism influence the organizational environment and relationships regardless of *who* the people are. PWs tend to identify the organizational environment by relating to social relationships rather than personal relationships.

Importantly, this finding may provide insight into nonprofit turnover. If the organizational culture is one that is so embedded within the organizational mission, purpose, and emotional motivation, perhaps PWs cannot influence the organizational culture anymore and merely fill a spot or position, rather than creating their own environment. In a way, when the NPO and its cause are so enmeshed, perhaps it has reached a type of organizational cultural saturation.

Third, the perception from PWs that RVs experience frustration with the PWs explains the communicative construction of emotion regarding the relationships in NPO. This finding closely relates to the results of RQ1 and enriches the understanding of relationships as well as the nature of nonprofit work. When PWs perceive RVs as being frustrated, PWs act in ways that aim to compensate for their perceived emotional frustration. Consequently, RVs perceive the PWs as profoundly supportive, and so feel encouraged and accepted in response. When this happens, we see a tangible outcome of the communicative construction of emotion concerning nonprofit relationships.

In sum, each component part of the organization is uniquely critical to the success of the organization in terms of structural relationship and personal relationship. OVs, PWs, and RVs all relate to one another in different ways that construct the organization itself. Through relating to MIA, constructing identities within MIA, and constructing relationships in three levels, participants acknowledge various means of communicatively constructing their emotion concerning nonprofit relationships.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The overarching scope of this work includes a literature review full of depth and breadth, combining several traditions and literatures. The assortment of discussions I have drawn from funnels into two research questions, with specific attention to detail. This is one justification for distinguishing between types of nonprofit workers by paid worker, office volunteer, and remote volunteer. I have asked two research questions: *How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning the nature of nonprofit work?* and *How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers?* Through the analysis of participants' comments, I have focused on the main goal: to explore the communicative construction of emotion in NPOs. I have reached this goal in three ways.

First, I respond to calls from Eschenfelder (2012) and Koschmann (2012) who proposed a need to communicatively theorize NPOs through an understanding of nonprofit emotion. This study begins to support the juncture of communication theory, NPOs, and emotions by understanding emotion through volunteer and employee perspectives. I secondly reach this goal by supporting the value of NPOs and their workers, including volunteers and employees. In the current work, I methodologically interviewed participants to understand emotion from their perspective. Intentionally, interview questions and analysis allowed room for participants to situate themselves within the nonprofit sector, a valuable and necessary segment of current society. Finally, this study explores nonprofits and emotion by complicating the current discussion of "emotion" by investigating how nonprofit workers communicatively construct their own emotion.

This conclusion summarizes by relating the findings and analyses to current literature, including existing discussions of nonprofit workers, emotion in nonprofit organizations, social identity and affect theories. Then, I present implications of this work as they relate to organizational communication scholars and nonprofit practitioners. I describe the limitations to this study, present future research ideas based on this work, and finally conclude with a brief personal reflection.

Summary

In this section, I summarize the findings of this work as it speaks to current literature. Then, I describe how these findings build together, with affect theory, to add to current organizational communication studies.

Nonprofit Workers: Volunteers and Employees

I drew a difference between paid workers and volunteers in order to understand different perspectives within the organization. As the current literature discusses, there are many differences between these types of workers. Three of these differences are motivations, compensation, and economic factors like interchangeability and professionalism. The current work supports these differences, specifically when OVs, PWs, and RVs describe their motivations and compensations. PWs tend to identify their motivations in combination with their compensation, whereas volunteers base their motivation on emotional benefits. This fits with current literature in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, which states that volunteers are motivated intrinsically (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2002), and paid workers are motivated extrinsically (Judge et al., 2001). Only one participant alludes to the replacement of paid workers with volunteers, or interchangeability (Simmons & Emanuele, 2009). This demonstrates its occurrence but does not demonstrate its impact on the organization. Additionally, the differences between and among volunteers and paid workers also indicate the focus of each group. Volunteers focus on what MIA does and why it happens while paid workers center on how MIA carries out its’ tasks. Still, comparing and contrasting the communicative construction of emotion between types of nonprofit workers restricts and confines them into presupposed definitions. Affect theory is one way we can complicate this distinction.

Emotion in Nonprofit Organizations

Relating to emotion in NPOs, participants used various approaches to emotion and identified a variety of characteristics of emotion. Guerrero et al. (1998) identified primary emotions as interest, joy, surprise, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, shame, shyness, and guilt, and elaborated their approaches to emotion based on these basic, primary emotions. Nonprofit workers at MIA identified many of these emotions, but the most intriguing part of their identification was how they used their emotion. Most volunteer participants related their emotion to the clients MIA serves and most paid workers related their emotion to their coworkers. This builds on current emotion literature by suggesting that contextual information is necessary. Related to Planalp’s (1999) process of emotion, most nonprofit workers described experiencing each step in the process of emotion: 1) precipitating events, 2) appraisal, 3) physiological changes, 4) action/expression, and 5) regulation. Most volunteers identify their “precipitating events” as a moment with a client or co-teacher, while most paid workers identify theirs as an instance with a coworker. Through these precipitating events, participants appraised their own emotion, experienced physiological changes and action/expression moments (like laughter or crying), and most participants identified a need for emotional regulation. Out of 17 interviewed participants, 8 participants said they felt like they needed to monitor their emotion so as to protect or influence the environment of which they are a part. Those who said they did not need to monitor their emotion elaborated that part of being in the organization is being open, honest, and authentic. One participant reflects, “You can pretty much say what’s on your mind, what you feel at the time, and there’s no one, absolutely no one who is going to question that” (Midnightsun). This suggests that emotion in MIA matches current emotion literature, including characteristics, approaches to, and types of emotion. One way to enrich the current discussion of emotion is through affect theory, moving from approaches to and types of emotion into theorizations of organizational affect and environment.

Emotional Work and Emotional Labor

Additionally, participants only indicated the experience of emotional labor and emotional work (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Hochschild, 1983; Miller et al., 2007) when explicitly asked, "Do you ever feel like you have to put on a face or change your mood to show something you're not feeling?" While experiencing elements of the Miller et al. (2007) emotional labor, emotional work, emotion with work, emotion at work, and emotion toward work, nonprofit workers largely defined their emotions in terms of their relationships with clients and with other nonprofit workers, not particularly in regards to monitoring or regulating their emotions. My holistic approach to combining all types of emotion allowed the participants to communicatively construct their own emotion regarding their work and their relationships, rather than looking for or expecting types of emotional work and emotional labor to surface. Not all participants communicatively construct their emotion in such terms and so arguing for distinctions between emotional labor and emotional work are not beneficial for this study.

Negative and Positive Effects

The findings in this study support current literature on burnout. As an arguably negative effect of emotion in the workplace, it is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a decreased sense of personal accomplishment (Tracy, 2000). While volunteers do not express feelings of burnout, many paid workers implicitly and explicitly identify their personal burnout. This study also supports current literature that argues that individuals find creative ways to adapt to burnout.

Emotion Management

For example, when perceiving the effects of emotion in the workplace, nonprofit workers at MIA rely on emotional awareness and perceive their emotion as positive, especially in terms of humor. Likely due to the nature of the organization, as it seeks to benefit those living with mental illness, nonprofit workers are highly attuned to their own and others' emotions. This emotional awareness decreases the dysfunctions of emotional labor (e.g., Bechtoldt et al. 2011), such as burnout. In addition, paid workers in this organization tend to use humor, laughter, and inside jokes to navigate the tensions of their emotional work. Using humor in the workplace can foster moments of team bonding (Shuler & Sypher, 2000) and can serve as a rationalizing tool for motivations, especially in nonprofits (Wolfe, 1998).

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (Ashforh & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Turner, 1982) provides interesting insight into nonprofit workers' communicative constructions of emotion. As Tidwell (2005) states, social identity theory:

> Holds that people seek to catalogue themselves and others into social categories by memberships, affiliation, age, gender, culture and others . . . the self-categorization process provides a way to order and compartmentalize organizational environments while defining the self in reference to the environment.

Social identity theory enriches findings from RQ1 and RQ2 and their subsequent themes. Especially in this NPO, where the focus is on mental illness and surrounding emotions, participants uniquely see themselves through the lens of how others see them. Emotion is something these workers have but it is also something that they are; there is no separation from emotion when constructing identity. This is why relating to MIA and constructing identity within MIA are so important, because they are emotional processes. Without these foundational steps that social identity theory suggests, understanding the communicative constructions of nonprofit workers' emotion regarding their relationships would lack useful depth and contextualization. Drawing in affect theory supplements these findings, particularly by complicating identity and emotion, convoluting their exact loci and dispositions.

<u>Crystallized Self</u>

Additionally, concepts of the real-self/fake-self dichotomy and the crystallized self (Tracy & Trethewey, 2005) inform notions of social identity theory in this study's findings. Participants tend to perceive themselves as crystallized rather than in a real-self/fake-self dichotomy. Though they do not explicitly identify this notion, there is an understanding that participants "wear many hats." For example, Justme describes her roles:

> Sometimes when I'm facilitating the . . . support group . . . I feel that I'm there to help them, they're not there to help me. There are times where I'm really not having a good day and I've gotta put on a smile and . . . facilitate the group . . . I've got to be able to change hats when I need to, I can't leave my housewife hat on while I'm teaching.

This is important regarding the communicative constructions of emotion concerning nonprofit work and the relationships because it indicates that participants validate all aspects of their perceived roles, rather than responding to parts as "fake" or "inauthentic." RVs especially utilize the crystallized self when they identify primarily by their affiliate title and then by subsequent volunteer roles, like board service or teaching/facilitating classes. Most participants identify themselves by their title and then elaborate on their responsibility, which indicates a connectedness to their identities within the organization and their relationships with other nonprofit workers.

Organizational Identity and Identification

Furthermore, drawing on social identity theory and into elements of organizational identity and identification, it is clear participants understand the organizational identity (or that which is central, distinctive, and enduring about an organization [Albert & Whetten, 1985]). They process the organizational identity by defining and contextualizing MIA. Specifically, participants draw on what they know about nonprofit organizing and the nonprofit sector in order to communicatively construct their emotion regarding their nonprofit work. Framing the organizational identity in this way reifies the communicative construction of organizing and how nonprofit workers use and experience emotion.

Metaphors

Nonprofit workers implicitly describe their organizational identification through the use of forced and ideographic metaphors. As current research suggests, the use of metaphors allow for a unique understanding of experiences within the organization. I explicitly asked participants to think of a TV show, film, or metaphor to explain their connection to the organization, seeking a forced metaphor. These ranged from films (*Patch Adams, August: Osage County,* and *Silver Linings Playbook)* to books (*Lust for Life)* and TV shows (*Seinfeld,* *Friends, Parks and Recreation).* These forced metaphors provide insight, especially when considering which aspect of the organization to which the metaphor refers. Most volunteers use their forced metaphors to explain their experience with clients, while most paid workers related their metaphors to their experience with their coworkers.

Organizational identification literature suggests that ideographic metaphors can lead to insight into the discursive productions of reality within the organization. This study also finds ideographic metaphors useful. Participants use these types of metaphors to draw similarities between an outside idea and the organization. The ideographic metaphors provide insight to the organizational identification of participants, and consequently, how they perceive themselves and the organization. Quite literally communicatively constructing their realities, participants refer to the organization in terms of pictures (e.g., "I can see the whole picture instead of just one [sic] of it" [Judy]), streets (e.g., "They're willing to share the road that they walked before with others . . . no body should ever have to walk any of this road alone" [Midnightsun], "Most of us have been down that road, it's a bumpy road" [Irene]), and other ideographic metaphors ("When the dragon wins at work sometimes, yeah the dragon wins. But if the dragon wins when I'm working with someone at MIA, and I know they’re hospitalized, maybe because of attempted suicide, it’s harder” [Newyork], “I don’t hear this very often but [she said] I love your story because it has a dark beauty . . . it is a dark beauty” [Ellen]). Forced and ideographic metaphors do not directly relate to the communicative construction of emotion and subsequently do not appear as a main finding or focus. However, they are useful for understanding participant perspectives; one future direction might be to conduct a qualitative metaphor analysis, comparing and contrasting between forced and ideographic metaphors.

Affect Theory

The primary contribution to this study is the braiding together of emotion, nonprofits, and communication. This study is unique and important to each of these literatures by adding affect theory. Many current studies, across disciplines, arguably reduce emotion and leave it quite essentialized, but the current work complicates emotion and leaves it conglomerated.

Specifically, affect theory provides depth to our understanding of emotion, informing complicated processes of communicatively constructing emotion in nonprofit organizations. Most significantly, participants equally elaborate on their emotions in terms of their environments. PWs refer to the environment of PWs at the main office while volunteers mostly refer to the environment of their affiliate locations. The contrast between emotion and affect that participants exemplify supports current literature by identifying that emotion and affect are closely related, but need to be drawn out. This happens through the ownership and experience of emotion/affect, the half-second gap, and the transmission of affect.

Ownership of Emotion/Affect

Through the ownership of emotion/affect, nonprofit workers help complicate the discussion of emotion, moving beyond terms of emotional labor and emotional work into ideas of affect. For example, findings suggest that participants utilize the intensity of affect, or the blend between social organizing and personal functioning (Massumi, 1995). Particularly when paid workers describe their environment, there is a balance between the social organizing of the organization (administrative, operational, and structure), and personal functioning (their own identities and emotions).

Current discussions of affect theory debate the clarity and distinction between affect and emotion. Traditional emotional theorizing claims that emotion comes from within (e.g., Anderson & Guerrero, 1998), which is partially supported here when participants say that they felt “joyful” or “sad.” One exemplar features the participant stating that she "brought out" emotion from another person, "It doesn't make you feel good to make someone cry, okay? It doesn't make you feel good to elicit those emotions out of somebody" (Midnightsun). This shows that nonprofit workers may perceive emotion to be owned by the individual, in line with traditional emotional theorizing.

Experience of Emotion/Affect

Conversely, nonprofit workers experience emotion/affect in many ways. Massumi (1995) refers to a "different difference," or a gap between content of an event and the effect of the event. For example, when one nonprofit worker describes leading other volunteers at an event (Brooke), she describes the content of the affective event. She then explains her reaction to the event: "It was fun just to work with volunteers because they were in my position, so they were kind of like being led by other people, and being led by me, which was weird." She verbally replicates her experience when asked, but until the words are spoken, the reality of her feeling or emotion was not communicated. This example fits with Massumi's (1995) argument that individuals experience affect in three ways: 1) as an unconscious affect, 2) that body and brain responses precede consciousness and can be neatly separated, and 3) that body and brain responses are beyond representation and are autonomous. Brooke's reflection of her experience with other volunteers rests in the second manner, moving beyond the unconscious affect by verbally explaining it, and also by repeating the experience in terms of how it made her feel, a communicative construction of emotion, including brain and body response, separate from consciousness.

Half-Second Gap

Massumi's (1995) half-second gap also supplements the current findings, especially in terms of social identity theory and relationships. The half-second gap is a stimulation of emotion that is only felt if it lasts more than half a second, meaning that humans absorb their external impulses more quickly than they can be perceived. Drawing a connection between affect theory and emotion to social identity theory and relationships, I argue that the half-second gap also occurs in terms of identifying oneself. One participant subtly identifies this half-second gap in terms of how she perceives herself when she says, "We identify ourselves by how other people see us" (Ellen). She understands that she defines herself by how others see her, catching this half-second gap by perceiving her external stimuli. Other participants define themselves by their external stimuli but do not directly perceive them.

Transmission of Affect

Affect theory also enriches the current study by bringing in the transmission of affect (Brennan, 2004). Participants explain their environment or atmosphere in several ways. For example, "It's genuine because I want to set a good environment" (Ellen), "Everyone understands and it's such a supportive environment" (Stephanie), "The environment and the atmosphere in the building itself in the room, itself is positive" (Shawni), "I find that it's just nicer to be pleasant and to exude that, make it a better work atmosphere" (Newyork). This demonstrates that the organization is metaphorically greater than typically supposed, nonrestrictive and inclusive of emotions, emotional relationships, and personal connections. Brennan (2004) claims that the transmission of affect is social in origin but biological and physical in effect, and the current findings support this idea. Participants describe the environment or atmosphere of the organization and identify the *social* nature of the affect, influenced by relationships and emotions.

Complicating Emotion with Affect

When participants communicate their emotion with emotion words, like love or joy, their social affects result in personal physical reactions. These results, then, support Wetherell's (2012) claim that the transmission of affect alone is not enough to completely understand affect theory. “Brennan’s theory of atmospheres,” argued Seyfert (2012), “does not explain why and how different bodies are affected in different ways by the same atmosphere” (p. 29). Wetherell (2012) argued that the mere transmission of affect, or the atmosphere, is not enough to explain affect theory and suggested a further look into how affect is shared. Wetherell (2012) neatly describes affect, emotion, and the need to complicate them together by stating that:

> Affect is about sense as well as sensibility. It is practical, communicative, and organized. In affective practice, bits of the body (e.g., facial muscles, thalamic-amygdala pathways in the brain, heart rate, regions of the prefrontal cortex, sweat glands, etc.) get patterned together with feelings and thoughts, interaction patterns and relationships, narratives and interpretive repertoires, social relations, personal histories, and ways of life. These components and modalities, each with their own logic and trajectories, are assembled together in interacting and recursive, or back and forth, practical methods. (p. 14)

Finally, addressing the communicative nature of emotion/affect reminds us that how one perceives the effects of emotion/affect relate directly to their identity and the social construction of an organization. Through the vital communicative constructs of emotion/affect, one can see (depending on their level of perception) that their emotion/affect ultimately constructs who they are and in turn, what the organization is. One’s own belief of their emotional or affective ownership and experience communicates internally what types of ideas circulate through their being, ultimately giving way to social constructions from all sides.

At the root of this summative discussion, I aim to complicate simple conceptualizations of nonprofit workers, approaches to and types of emotion, and utilize affect theory to move toward an understanding how and if the emotions of different nonprofit workers and their "enhancing or depressing energies" (Wetherell, 2012, p. 3) can enter into each other. This study builds on the current aggregate of literature and complicates the minimalism of emotion in the workplace in order to understand one way that nonprofit workers communicate and ultimately engage in nonprofit organizing. Usually, however, participants communicate their affect through emotion, which is "conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning" (Massumi, 1995, p. 88). This study ultimately provides a starting place for future studies that seek to combine elements of nonprofit organizing, volunteers and paid workers, emotion, identity, and affect.

Implications

As I present the implications of the current work, I do so primarily for two audiences: nonprofit organizational communication scholars within the academy and nonprofit organizational practitioners, including executive directors, boards of directors, and umbrella organizations that frame each state's nonprofit sector. These two groups are those with whom I hope this study will most resonate.

For nonprofit organizational communication scholars, this study holds two main implications. First, as I have illustrated here, it is possible to draw from a wide variety of academic traditions and weave the ideas along with communication concepts. This inclusion provides depth and breadth in order to enrich communication concepts. In much of communication literature, scholars are "purists" and rely only on their frame of reference to understand communicative processes. In order to move forward, however, perhaps a culmination of academic backgrounds is necessary. I have drawn from sociology, psychology, business and managerial literature, and communication literatures in order to frame my study's research questions, methods, and ultimately the results, findings, and analyses. As communication scholars, as Deetz (2010) contended, we have embraced many disciplines' *theories of communication*, but have not focused much on *communication theories.* It seems reasonable that the current research provides a framework, particularly for nonprofit organizational communication scholars, to conduct studies in order to create a specific communicative theory of NPOs. For instance, building on this study, future longitudinal or observational studies may elaborate even further on how socially constructed identity and emotions inform one another, through affect, in NPOs.

Second, for organizational communication scholars focusing on nonprofits (especially those coming from a constructivist paradigm), this study should demonstrate that emotion is not easily simplified. As I have demonstrated throughout, a more complicated view of emotion is necessary to understand how nonprofit workers communicate. By adopting this view, we are able to understand emotion as it guides understandings of work, organizations, and workplace relationships. We can better integrate emotion into our understanding of organizational life rather than adopting reductionist approaches that lead to knowing more about less. This means moving beyond the basic types of emotion in NPOs (like happiness, joy, disgust, shame, and guilt) and qualitatively interacting with participants to let them communicatively construct their own emotion. When we expect participants to explain their emotion in these cookie-cutter emotion words, we miss out on their complicated understandings and perceptions of who they are, what they do, and ultimately how they communicatively construct their reality.

Turning toward practitioners, there are three main implications. The first implication can be discussed by drawing comparisons across

RQ1 and RQ2 and their themes. Themes 1 both include *defining* and *relating* as steps in understanding the communicative construction of emotion regarding the nature of nonprofit work and the relationships of nonprofit workers. In RQ1, these *defining* elements include job responsibilities, funding, organizational change, raising awareness, maintaining confidentiality, and suggesting improvement. In RQ2, the *relating* occurs with regards to a shared experience, defining volunteer, identifying as a volunteer, and the structure. With their respective foci, both establishing themes demonstrate that nonprofit workers make sense of their surroundings, perhaps before moving on to relating emotionally. Themes 2 both involve a form of explanation regarding the definitions. In RQ1, nonprofit workers *contextualize* the organization and in RQ2 nonprofit workers *characterize* their relationships. This second, less expressive step in understanding the communicative construction of emotions indicates that most volunteers and paid workers qualify or evaluate their experiences. The third theme in each RQ explains the construction of emotion and relationships. Both RQ's demonstrate that not all nonprofit workers use emotion the same; some evaluate their relationships with emotion, while others do not. Acknowledging that not all nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion regarding nonprofit work or relationships in explicit terms (e.g., "family," "love") provides practitioners an important understanding of their coworkers. However, most nonprofit workers *do* define and qualify their experiences.

Second, the environment of a NPO is made up of the people within the organization and their relationships. This includes their friendships, alliances, and tensions, as well as their emotions and emotional complications. Particularly, in a NPO, the connection to the organization and its purpose may be so closely intertwined that the cause of the organization may supersede the people in the organization. It is important to acknowledge that though the environment is constructed of nonprofit workers and their relationships, the people seem fairly replaceable by the underlying goal of the nonprofit. In terms of nonprofit organizational turnover, this may be one insight into understanding why turnover happens—there is a solidity around the cause, that workers perceive it will continue, so they feel more autonomy to leave knowing that the cause and mission will not change, even though their physical presence will.

Third, nonprofit practitioners should recognize that sometimes the mission or cause of the organization (in this case, supporting those who have mental illness) is likely of higher priority to nonprofit workers than other elements of nonprofit work, like motivation, compensation, and relationships. Regarding nonprofit turnover, perhaps the idea that nonprofit workers feel more autonomy to leave is so that they can turn to someplace else where they can better achieve the cause of the organization. It is important to know that, although nonprofit workers strongly relate to their work and others within the organization by defining and qualifying experiences, the emotional connection of nonprofit workers to the cause may be so strong it leads them to another organization.

Finally, this study implies that there are indeed differences between nonprofit volunteers and paid workers, as Ashcraft and Kedrowicz (2002) supported. This study elaborates that within each type of worker, there are worker subcategories, like administrative and operational paid workers. Additionally, there are many types of volunteers and each has a different perception of themselves and others. This suggests that grouping volunteers into one group oversimplifies the complexities of nonprofit volunteers. Volunteers and paid workers, including their diversified perspectives, concentrations, and purposes, are all critical parts of the organization. As demonstrated through RQ1, each type of worker focuses on a particular aspect of the organization. Each aspect is necessary for the organization's perceivable success. Without one group, the NPO would look drastically different and thus the relationships would change, affecting the connections between workers and to the cause, and would also influence the entire purpose of the organization.

Limitations

While I have found several implications for NPOs and communication scholars related to the communicative construction of emotion regarding nonprofit work and nonprofit relationships, it is also important to acknowledge relevant limitations. I primarily identify four limitations with the intention that future research will take these into consideration.

First, as I have been the primary investigator on this work my positionality in academic, personal, and social realms certainly influences the findings of this research. For example, because I was involved with MIA for about 8 months prior to data collection, I did not ask some participants information that I already knew—and their answers may have been different than my assumptions. My interview structure and questions may have encouraged some of the findings.

Second, in this qualitative study, I interviewed a total of 17 nonprofit workers: 4 office volunteers, 7 paid workers, and 6 remote volunteers. I originally proposed conducting a total of 18 interviews, 6 with each type of participant. However, due to time constraints and limited access to office volunteer participants, the participant numbers vary. This may be a limitation to the study in that it quantitatively prioritizes the voice of the paid worker. Additionally, all participants are members of the same, singular organization. Examining other nonprofit workers at a number of NPOs may provide insight to nonprofit organizing and emotion that this study does not.

Third, as I have chosen to adopt a broad variety of academic perspectives and traditions, I have had to balance the benefits of using several literatures with the limitations of lacking communicative precision. While I have attempted to remain focused on the communicative aspects of emotion regarding nonprofit work and relationships, there have arguably been moments where the communication focus could be more refined, specific, and exact. Here, I have traded the meticulousness of a purely communicative work for the widespread ideas that other perspectives include.

Fourth, the type of nonprofit organization I studied is specific—it is the only one in the area that exists for the reasons it does, it is staffed by a certain number of individuals, and is unique from other nonprofits based on structure, finances, and mission. I address the fact that I summarize many of my arguments by simply saying "nonprofits," where, in reality, my claims may only exist for this type of nonprofit and its context. It is important to understand the subject of nonprofit type when applying my claims.

Fifth, as a graduate student with a desire to qualitatively understand NPOs, I was challenged by gaining organizational access. Community engaged literature suggests that "dropping in" on an organization does far more harm than good (e.g., Lewis, 2005). This was my very last intention in conducting this work and I aimed to benefit the organization concurrently through my involvement and through my research. Unfortunately, this original intention was compromised. While balancing my own multiple roles, the most consequential limitation of this study is that I hold an outsider status. Even during my internship period of volunteer coordinating, I arguably had ulterior motives that aimed at learning about the organization to enrich my future data collection, setting me apart as an outsider. I fear that instead of helping those at the organization through my research process, I have hindered them by consuming time and resources. This limitation has far-reaching implications beyond the timeframe of my thesis research, outside of the realm of academic work, and into the realm of my own personal appreciation and gratitude.

Future Directions

Moving forward, there are many academic places to where this study can naturally expand. I identify four future directions in this section. First, a future direction of this research would be to conduct longitudinal qualitative studies. A longitudinal study may provide elaboration and clarification into nonprofit organizational turnover, a constant issue in the nonprofit sector, evident but under-examined in this study. Similarly, conducting focus groups may be valuable in future research. This may allow researchers to uncover in-the-moment interactions and emotions of relationships that qualitative interviews did not. A third future direction suggests conducting full-fledged observation with a NPO, to negotiate part of the first limitation listed here. Using observation methods may allow researchers to see to what extent these findings emerge without qualitative interviews.

Finally, a future direction for researchers, building on this study, is to press forward to build a communicative theory of NPOs. Regardless of my various positionalities and other limitations, this study has demonstrated the value of considering emotion as integral to nonprofit life. This work provides a starting point among the likes of Eschenfelder (2012), Lewis (2012), and Koschmann (2012), who suggested that perhaps the intersection I have pursued (emotion, NPOs, and communication) is where a communicative theory of NPOs begins.

Conclusion and Reflection

The most significant contribution this study offers is an exploration of emotion in NPOs. Moving beyond the simplistic notions of emotion and discrepancies of how emotion is conceptualized through affect theory, this work primarily aimed to complicate current theorizations of emotion. After reviewing relevant literature, I presented a qualitative research study that sought to understand the ways that nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion. I asked two research questions: *How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning the nature of nonprofit work?;* and *How do nonprofit workers communicatively construct their emotion concerning their relationships with other nonprofit workers?* This study fills a gap in current organizational communication literature particularly by examining nonprofit volunteers and paid workers as separate and distinct from one another. This study also adds depth to the current communicative theorizations of emotion by adding affect theory.

In conclusion, my hope through this work is to open conversations about nonprofit organizing and emotion in communication realms. Doing so aims to connect parts of my identity that I am fond of—nonprofits, communication, and the importance of using emotion. The value of NPOs is unmatched, and by focusing on a few members of one NPO, I aim to support their daily emotional work. When I began imagining what my thesis would look like, I thought I could draw similarities and comparisons among different types of nonprofits; "Surely those who work with the homeless deal with more emotional things than those who work at a fine art museum," I thought. I did not make this argument, but I did find and learn so much more. For one, substantially constructing this type of argument could make up a life's work.

I arbitrarily thought I would "get in" with a nonprofit, stick around for a while, and conduct my research. My naïve eyes were quickly opened that this idea was not practical, a lesson I learned from my key informant and other participants. To hang around for a while and leave once I had what I needed made me selfish and self-serving, and it cued me in to the true struggles of community-engaged research.

What I did not realize at the beginning of this endeavor was how close I would become to my participants and the organization. I thought each participant could be replaced by others, by another organization, and I would generally find the same things. What I know now is that all roads lead us where we need to be and in the proper time, and finding peace and patience along the way is hard; but can be much easier when we are surrounded by friends, family, and coworkers that we love.

I am thankful for each interview I was able to have, for each taught me more and more about this organization, about emotion in NPOs, and about mental illness. I did not intend to study mental illness; the focus never resided here, but rather those who work to support others living with mental illness and their family members. This, on one hand, has been a journey of reaching a deadline and formalities. On the other, more heavy hand, it has been a journey of forgiveness, reconciliation, and sanctification. For once, my spiritual and academic views have aligned and without this study, I would not finally feel whole.

I conclude with a poem (John Donne) that one of my participants used to help me understand her relationship to her work, mental illness, and its sometimes devastating effects. I hope it resonates with you as it has with me:

> No man is an island, entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. As well as if a promontory were. As well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And there forever never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE: OFFICE VOLUNTEER

Describe your job/volunteer title and describe your work.
How long have you been involved with MIA?
How and why did you become involved in MIA?
What keeps you coming back, or what motivates you to pursue involvement at MIA?
What movie, TV show, or metaphor would you use to describe your experience with MIA?
Describe the people who work for MIA.
How do the people you see when you volunteer influence you?
How do you know you've had a good day at work or volunteering?
What about a hard day?
Tell me about a time when you felt especially *proud* about your work.
What was the work environment like when you started at MIA?
Has the work environment changed since you started at MIA? If so, how?
What are your experiences working with paid workers at MIA?
How would you express your feelings about the paid workers at MIA?
Put yourself in a paid staff member (who works at the State Office)'s shoes. Talk about how you think they experience MIA.
What rewards or joys do you experience with paid workers (what are the positives)?
If possible, tell me about a specific tension you've experienced working with paid workers? What happened? How did that make you feel (what are the negatives)?
What are your experiences working with other MIA volunteers?
How would you express your feelings about other MIA volunteers?
What rewards or joys do you experience with other volunteers (positives)?
If possible, tell me about a specific tension you've experienced

working with other volunteers? What happened? How did that make you feel (negatives)?
Do you see any differences between volunteers and paid workers at MIA? If so, how does this affect you?
What comes to mind when I say my study is on “emotion”?
What emotion do you find yourself feeling the most when you’re volunteering?
Do you ever feel like you have to put on a face or change your mood to show something you’re not feeling? When? How so? How does this influence you?
Since you don’t get paid as a volunteer, why do you continue to volunteer?
If you did receive a paycheck, how would your engagement with MIA change?
Overall, how would you express your feelings about being a part of MIA?
For confidentiality reasons, I don’t want to refer to you in my research by your real name. Do you have a made-up name you prefer I could use instead?
Is there anything you’d like to add?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE: PAID WORKER

Describe your job title and describe your work.
How long have you been involved with MIA?
How and why did you become involved in MIA?
What keeps you coming back, or what motivates you to pursue involvement at MIA?
What movie, TV show, or metaphor would you use to describe your experience with MIA?
Describe the people who work for MIA.
How do the people you see every day (regularly) at MIA influence you?
How do you know you've had a good day at work or volunteering? What about a hard day?
Tell me about a time when you felt especially *proud* about work.
What was the work environment like when you started here?
Has the work environment changed since you started here? If so, how?
What is your experience working with your coworkers?
How would you express your feelings about your coworkers?
What rewards or joys do you face with coworkers, what are the positives?
Has there been a specific time when you've experienced tension working with your coworkers? What happened? How did that make you feel?
As a paid worker, does your paycheck influence your motivation to work for MIA? How?
If you didn't receive a paycheck, how would your engagement with MIA change?
What is your experience with working with MIA volunteers?
How would you express your feelings about MIA's volunteers?
Put yourself in a volunteer's shoes. Talk about how you think they experience MIA.

What rewards or joys do you face with volunteers, what are the positives?
Has there been a time where you experienced tension working with volunteer? What happened? How did it make you feel?
Do you see any differences between volunteers and paid workers at MIA? If so, what are they? How do the differences affect you?
What comes to mind when I say my study is on "emotion"?
Do you ever feel like you have to put on a face or change your mood to show something you're not feeling? When? How so? How does this influence you?
What emotion do you find yourself feeling the most?
Overall, how would you express your feelings about being a part of MIA?
For confidentiality reasons, I don't want to refer to you in my research by your real name. Do you have a made-up name you prefer I could use instead?
Is there anything you'd like to add?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE: REMOTE VOLUNTEER

Describe your job/volunteer title and describe your work.
How long have you been involved with MIA?
How and why did you become involved in MIA?
What keeps you coming back, or what motivates you to pursue involvement at MIA?
What movie, TV show, or metaphor would you use to describe your experience with MIA?
Describe the people who work for MIA.
How do the people you see when you volunteer influence you?
How do you know you've had a good day at work or volunteering?
What about a hard day?
Tell me about a time when you felt especially *proud* about your work.
What was the work environment like when you started at MIA?
Has the work environment changed since you started at MIA? If so, how?
How does your distance from the state office affect your experience?
What are your experiences working with paid workers at MIA?
How would you express your feelings about the paid workers at MIA?
Put yourself in a paid staff member (who works at the State Office)'s shoes. Talk about how you think they experience MIA.
What rewards or joys do you experience with paid workers (what are the positives)?
If possible, tell me about a specific tension you've experienced working with paid workers? What happened? How did that make you feel (what are the negatives)?
What are your experiences working with other MIA volunteers?
How would you express your feelings about other MIA volunteers?
What rewards or joys do you experience with other volunteers

(positives)?
If possible, tell me about a specific tension you've experienced working with other volunteers? What happened? How did that make you feel (negatives)?
Do you see any differences between volunteers and paid workers at MIA? If so, how does this affect you?
What comes to mind when I say my study is on "emotion"?
What emotion do you find yourself feeling the most when you're volunteering?
Do you ever feel like you have to put on a face or change your mood to show something you're not feeling? When? How so? How does this influence you?
Since you don't get paid as a volunteer, why do you continue to volunteer?
If you did receive a paycheck, how would your engagement with MIA change?
Overall, how would you express your feelings about being a part of MIA?
For confidentiality reasons, I don't want to refer to you in my research by your real name. Do you have a made-up name you prefer I could use instead?
Is there anything you'd like to add?

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